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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Report on the sixteenth session

(Geneva, 22 September - 10 October 1997)

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I. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Organization of work

The Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Having considered the report of the eighth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies (A/52/507, annex),

Agrees on the following:

1. In view of the specificities of each of the six human rights treaties, the consolidation of reports to the six human rights treaty bodies into a single report would not be conducive to the implementation of the rights enshrined in each treaty, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

2. The suggestion to convene an extraordinary three-day meeting of the chairpersons in February 1998 is welcomed as it would provide an opportunity to further explore the issue of possible reforms designed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the treaty body system;

3. While taking due account of the general guidelines regarding the form and contents of periodic reports adopted by the Committee at its thirteenth session (CRC/C/58), the States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child should focus on a limited range of issues in their periodic reports, in particular those issues identified in the concluding observations adopted by the Committee in relation to the previous report.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL AND OTHER MATTERS

A. States parties to the Convention

1. As at 10 October 1997, the closing date of the sixteenth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there were 191 States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 and opened for signature and ratification or accession in New York on 26 January 1990. It entered into force on 2 September 1990, in accordance with the provisions of its article 49. A list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention is contained in annex I to the present report.

2. The texts of the declarations, reservations or objections made by States parties with respect to the Convention are reproduced in document CRC/C/2/Rev.6.

B. Opening and duration of the session

3. The Committee on the Rights of the Child held its sixteenth session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 22 September to 10 October 1997. The Committee held 28 meetings (399th to 426th). An account of the Committee's deliberations at its sixteenth session is contained in the relevant summary records (CRC/C/SR.399-406, 409-413, 415-422 and 426). At the opening of the session, the Acting Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Ralph Zacklin, addressed the Committee, and informed it of recent developments relevant to the protection and promotion of the rights of the child.

C. Membership and attendance

4. All the members of the Committee except Mrs. Esther Margaret Queen Mokhuane attended the sixteenth session. A list of the members, together with an indication of the duration of their terms of office, is provided in annex II to the present report. Mr. Francesco Paolo Fulci, Mrs. Nafsiah Mboi and Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg were not able to attend the session in its entirety.

5. The following United Nations bodies were represented at the session: United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

6. The following specialized agencies were also represented at the session: International Labour Organization, World Health Organization, UNAIDS, the World Bank.

7. Representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross and of the Institut Henri Dunant also attended the session.

8. A representative of the Inter-American Children's Institute also attended the session.

9. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations were also in attendance at the session:

General consultative status

International Council of Women, International Movement ATD Fourth World, Zonta International.

Special consultative status

Association for the Advancement of Psychological Understanding of Human Nature, Caritas Internationalis, Coalition against Trafficking in Women, Defence for Children International, International Catholic Child Bureau, International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, International Federation Terre des Hommes, International Service for Human Rights.

Roster

World Organization against Torture.

Others

Epoch Worldwide, International Inner Wheel, Network for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, One World Productions.

D. Agenda

10. At its 399th meeting, on 22 September 1997, the Committee adopted the following provisional agenda.

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Organizational and other matters.

3. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with article 44 of the Convention.

4. Consideration of reports of States parties.

5. Review of developments relevant to the work of the Committee.

6. General discussion on "The rights of children with disabilities".

7. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies.

8. Methods of work of the Committee.

9. Future meetings of the Committee.

10. Other matters.

E. Pre-sessional working group

11. In accordance with a decision of the Committee at its first session, a pre-sessional working group met in Geneva from 9 to 13 June 1997. All members except Mr. Francesco Paolo Fulci and Mrs. Marilia Sardenberg participated in the working group. Representatives of the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization also participated in the meetings of the working group. A representative of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as representatives from various national and international non-governmental organizations, attended the session.

12. The purpose of the pre-sessional working group is to facilitate the Committee's work under articles 44 and 45 of the Convention, primarily by reviewing State party reports and identifying in advance the main questions that would need to be discussed with the representatives of the reporting States. It also provides an opportunity to consider questions relating to technical assistance and international cooperation.

13. The pre-sessional working group held nine meetings, at which it examined lists of issues put before it by members of the Committee relating to the initial reports of five countries: the Czech Republic, the Democratic People's Repubic of Korea, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago and Uganda. The lists of issues were transmitted to the Permanent Missions of the States concerned with a note requesting written answers to the issues raised in the list, if possible before 20 August 1997.

F. Organization of work

14. The Committee considered the organization of work at its 399th meeting, on 22 September 1997. The Committee had before it the draft programme of work for the sixteenth session, prepared by the Secretary-General in consultation with the Chairperson of the Committee, and the report of the Committee on its fifteenth session (CRC/C/66).

G. Future regular meetings

15. The Committee noted that its seventeenth session would take place from 5 to 23 January 1998 and its pre-sessional working group would meet from 13 to 17 October 1997.

III. REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION

A. Submission of reports

16. The Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Notes by the Secretary-General on initial reports by States parties due in 1992 (CRC/C/3), 1993 (CRC/C/8/Rev.3), 1994 (CRC/C/11/Rev.3), 1995 (CRC/C/28), 1996 (CRC/C/41), 1997 (CRC/C/51) and 1998 (CRC/C/61); and on periodic reports of States parties due in 1997 (CRC/C/65);

(b) Note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Convention and the status of submission of reports (CRC/C/67);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the consideration of initial reports by States parties to the Convention (CRC/C/27/Rev.9);

(d) Note by the Secretary-General on areas in which the need for technical advice and advisory services has been identified in the light of the observations adopted by the Committee (CRC/C/40/Rev.7).

The Committee was informed that, in addition to the six reports that were scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its present session (see paragraph 27 below) and those which had been received prior to the Committee's fifteenth session (see CRC/C/66, para. 19), the Secretary-General had received the initial reports of Venezuela (CRC/C/3/Add.54) and Grenada (CRC/C/3/Add.55) and the second periodic reports of Bolivia (CRC/C/65/Add.1), Honduras (CRC/C/65/Add.2), Sweden (CRC/C/65/Add.3) and Yemen (CRC/C/70/Add.1). The status of submission of reports by States parties under article 44 of the Convention is given in annex III.

17. A list of initial reports considered by the Committee as of 10 October 1997, as well as a provisional list of initial reports scheduled for consideration at the Committee's seventeenth and eighteenth sessions, are contained in annexes V and VI respectively.

18. As at 10 October 1997 the Committee had received 109 initial and 4 periodic reports. A total of 79 reports have been examined by the Committee.

19. By a note verbale dated 21 May 1997, the Permanent Mission of Bahrain to the United Nations Office at Geneva transmitted information on the implementation of article 24 of the Convention.

20. By a letter dated 27 June 1997, the Permanent Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations Office at Geneva transmitted a report prepared following the presentation of New Zealand's initial report to the Committee in January 1997.

21. By a note verbale dated 28 August 1997, the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations Office at Geneva transmitted the observations of the Government of Cuba relating to the concluding observations (CRC/C/15/Add.72) adopted by the Committee upon its consideration of the initial report of Cuba.

B. Consideration of reports

22. At its sixteenth session, the Committee examined initial reports submitted by six States parties under article 44 of the Convention. It devoted 17 of its 28 meetings to the consideration of reports (see CRC/C/SR.400-405, 409-416 and 420-422).

23. At the request of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the consideration of the initial report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which was originally scheduled for the sixteenth session, was postponed. Consequently, the report of the Czech Republic, which had been kept "in reserve" as a possible substitute, was scheduled for consideration.

24. The following reports, listed in the order in which they were received by the Secretary-General, were before the Committee at its sixteenth session: Australia (CRC/C/8/Add.31), Lao People's Democratic Republic (CRC/C/8/Add.32), Uganda (CRC/C/3/Add.40), Trinidad and Tobago (CRC/C/11/Add.10), Togo (CRC/C/3/Add.42), Czech Republic (CRC/C/11/Add.11).

25. In accordance with rule 68 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Committee, representatives of all the reporting States were invited to attend the meetings of the Committee at which their reports were examined.

26. The following sections, arranged on a country-by-country basis according to the sequence followed by the Committee in its consideration of the reports, contain concluding observations reflecting the main points of discussion and indicating, where necessary, issues that require specific follow-up.

27. More detailed information is contained in the reports submitted by the States parties and in the summary records of the relevant meetings of the Committee.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Lao People's Democratic Republic

28. The Committee considered the initial report of Lao People's Democratic Republic (CRC/C/8/Add.32) at its 400th to 402nd meetings (see CRC/C/SR.400-402), held on 23 and 24 September 1997, and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

29. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its initial report and written answers to the list of issues (CRC/C/Q/LAO/1). The Committee also expresses its appreciation to the State party for sending a high-ranking and multidisciplinary delegation. The Committee is encouraged by the frank, self-critical and cooperative tone of the dialogue, during which the delegation of the State party indicated policy and programme directions and difficulties encountered with regard to the implementation of the

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* At the 426th meeting, held on 10 October 1997.

provisions of the Convention. The Committee, however, notes with regret that the report did not always follow the guidelines, in particular in relation to the general principles, which are not mentioned, and did not provide statistical and disaggregated data and information on the concrete effects of measures adopted or on the implementation of the existing legislation, in particular in regard to the protection issues.

B. Positive aspects

30. The Committee takes note of the political will of the State party to promote and protect the rights of the child, and its efforts to develop and implement a socio-economic development programme for the year 2000. The Committee welcomes the efforts made by the State party in adopting its "Education For All" action plan, its efforts in the area of immunization, as well as combating iodine deficiency, and its project on mainstream education for disabled children.

31. The Committee also notes the establishment in 1992 of the National Commission for Mothers and Children and welcomes its reorganization in 1996 and the widening of its mandate to cover all aspects of the Convention, including protection and participation issues.

32. The Committee notes with appreciation the recent efforts of the State party to address the problem of Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) such as the establishment in 1995 of the UXO Trust Fund and the Laos National UXO Programme established under the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and many donors.

33. The Committee welcomes the State party's seeking advice and technical assistance to ensure the full integration of the provisions of the Convention in its legislation, to establish a system of administration of juvenile justice, and to train professionals on the rights of the child.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

34. The Committee notes that the Lao People's Democratic Republic is among the least developed countries. The Committee also notes that the State party is in a phase of transition from a centrally planned to a market economy; this produces or aggravates social problems that have a negative impact on the situation of children.

D. Principal subjects of concern

35. The Committee is concerned that although a new Constitution was promulgated in 1991 and major pieces of legislation, such as the Family Law, the Penal Law and the Labour Law, came into effect in 1990. The national legislation does not fully conform to the Convention.

36. The Committee is equally concerned that insufficient attention has been paid to the provisions of article 4 of the Convention concerning budgetary allocations to the maximum extent of available resources.

37. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient attention paid by the State party to systematic, comprehensive and disaggregated qualitative and quantitative data collection and to the identification of appropriate indicators and mechanisms to evaluate the progress and the impact of policies and measures adopted for all areas covered by the Convention, especially the most hidden such as child abuse or ill-treatment, but also in relation to all groups of children including minority group children, girl children, children in rural areas and children victims of sale, trafficking and prostitution.

38. The Committee is equally concerned at the insufficient attention paid by the authorities to the identification of monitoring mechanisms for all areas covered by the Convention and in relation to all groups of children.

39. While recognizing the efforts of the State party to disseminate the Convention, the Committee is of the view that the measures adopted to promote widespread awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention for both adults and children, in particular for minorities and in rural areas, are insufficient. The Committee remains concerned at the lack of adequate and systematic training for professional groups working with and for children including judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, policy makers, lawmakers, government and military officials, community leaders, health professionals, teachers, social workers, and personnel working in child-care institutions.

40. The Committee is concerned at the lack of a legislative framework for the creation of national independent non-governmental organizations.

41. Of particular concern is the fact that the State party does not appear to have fully taken into account the provisions of the Convention, especially its general principles as contained in its articles 2 (non-discrimination), 3 (best interests of the child), 6 (right to life, survival and development) and 12 (respect for the views of the child), in its legislation, its administrative and judicial decisions, and in its policies and programmes relevant to children.

42. As regards the implementation of article 2, the Committee is particularly concerned at the insufficiency of the measures adopted to ensure the full enjoyment by all children of the rights recognized in the Convention, in particular in relation to access to education and health services, and protection against exploitation. Of particular concern to the Committee are certain vulnerable groups of children, in particular girl children, children belonging to minorities, children living in rural and remote areas and children born out of wedlock.

43. The Committee expresses concern regarding the implementation of article 12 of the Convention, as children's participation is still low and they are traditionally represented by adults, and as the views of the child are not sufficiently taken into account, especially within the family, the school, and the care and justice systems.

44. The Committee is concerned at the lack of harmonization between the legal age for the end of compulsory education, which is 10, and the minimum legal age for employment, which is 15.

45. The Committee is concerned at the insufficiency of the measures adopted to discourage early marriage, which is a harmful traditional practice in certain communities.

46. In the light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned that there are children who are not registered at birth.

47. The Committee is concerned at the lack of awareness and information on ill-treatment and abuse of children, including sexual abuse, both within and outside the family, and at the lack of appropriate measures and mechanisms to prevent and combat such abuse. The lack of special structures for children victims of abuses and their limited access to justice are also matters of concern, as is the lack of rehabilitation measures for such children. The persistence of corporal punishment within the family and its acceptance by the society is also a matter of concern.

48. The Committee is concerned at the lack of measures, including legal ones, to ensure that children maintain contact with both parents in case of divorce or separation, as well as at the absence of a mechanism to ensure the recovery of maintenance for the child.

49. The Committee is concerned that the provisions of the Family Law regarding adoption do not conform fully to article 21 of the Convention, or with the principle of the best interests of the child.

50. The Committee is concerned at the high maternal mortality rate, the high mortality and morbidity rates among children, the lack of access to prenatal and maternity care, and the generally limited access to public health care and to medicines, in particular in rural areas. The very high level of malnutrition is also a matter of concern. The Committee is also concerned at the high incidence of traffic accidents involving children and at the inadequacy of the efforts to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS in the communities and at school, in particular in the rural areas.

51. The Committee is concerned that the legislation does not specifically mention that primary education is free. It remains concerned at the low level of school enrolment and the high drop-out and repetition rates, the disparities between urban and rural areas and between ethnic groups in terms of enrolment and quality of education provided, the shortage of physical infrastructure, school materials and teachers, and the low qualifications of teachers, in particular in rural areas. The Committee is particularly concerned at the lack of vocational training opportunities, in particular in rural and remote areas.

52. The Committee is concerned by the shortage of physical and psychological rehabilitation programmes and services for unexploded ordnance victims. The problem of the toxic chemical contamination of soil and water, particularly in the six southern provinces, is also a matter of concern.

53. The Committee is concerned at the economic exploitation of children, including in the informal sector, particularly as domestic servants, in agriculture and in the family context.

54. The Committee is concerned by the increasing phenomenon of child prostitution and trafficking which affects boys as well as girls. It is worried about the insufficiency of measures to prevent and combat this phenomenon, and the lack of rehabilitation measures.

55. With regard to article 35 of the Convention, the Committee is also concerned at the inadequacy of the measures taken to address the situation of children affected by drugs and/or other substance abuse.

56. The situation in relation to the administration of juvenile justice, in particular its compatibility with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention and other relevant standards such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, is a matter of concern to the Committee. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the lack of a legal framework for the administration of juvenile justice, the grounds for arrest and detention of children that can include prostitution, the absence of specialized judges, and the lack of social workers and qualified legal defenders.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

57. The Committee recommends that the State party initiate a comprehensive review of existing legislation with a view to undertaking adequate legislative reform to ensure full conformity of its legislation with all the provisions of the Convention, in particular its general principles (articles 2, 3, 6 and 12). The Committee also suggests that the State party envisage the adoption of a specific code or legislation for children, with a separate section on children who need a special protection. International cooperation with, among others, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Children's Fund can be sought to this effect.

58. The Committee also suggests that the State party envisage acceding to other international human rights instruments, including the two International Covenants on Human Rights.

59. The Committee encourages the State party to pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention and to ensure judicious distribution of resources at the local and central levels. Budget allocations for the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights should be ensured to the maximum extent of available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation, as well as in the light of the principle of the best interests of the child (article 3).

60. With a view to improving the general framework for the protection of children from all forms of abuse, neglect and exploitation, the Committee encourages the development of a social worker's system.

61. The Committee further recommends that the State party develop a comprehensive system of collecting disaggregated data in order to gather all necessary information on the situation of children in the various areas covered by the Convention, including on children belonging to the most vulnerable groups.

62. The Committee also suggests that a multidisciplinary monitoring system be established to assess progress achieved and difficulties encountered in the realization of the rights recognized by the Convention at the central and local levels, and in particular to monitor regularly the impact of economic change on children. The Committee suggests that the mandate of the National Commission for Mothers and Children be strengthened in this regard. The Committee recommends that the State party also explore the possibility of an independent machinery for complaints, such as an ombudsperson. The Committee further stresses the need to strengthen the capacity of the National Commission for Mothers and Children in its role of coordinator, in particular between the central, provincial and local levels. The Committee encourages the State party to seek assistance from, among others, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in this regard.

63. The Committee strongly encourages the State party to strengthen its efforts to make the provisions and principles of the Convention widely known by adults and children alike, in the light of article 42 of the Convention. It encourages the State party to further increase, through the print and electronic media, public awareness of the participatory rights of children, and to incorporate the Convention in the school curriculum. It also suggests that the State party develop appropriate oral or visual material to further spread knowledge of the Convention among the minorities. The Committee suggests that the State party seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF, in this regard.

64. The Committee recommends the development of adequate and systematic training for professional groups working with and for children, including judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, policy makers and lawmakers, government and military officials, community leaders, health professionals, teachers, social workers, personnel working in child-care institutions for children and police officers, and that children's rights be included in their training curricula. The Committee suggests that the State party seek assistance from, among others, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and UNICEF in this regard.

65. The Committee also recommends that a legislative framework be adopted in order to encourage the establishment of national non-governmental organizations.

66. It is the Committee's view that further efforts must be undertaken to ensure that the general principles of the Convention not only guide policy discussions and decision-making, but also are appropriately integrated into any judicial and administrative decisions and in the development and implementation of all projects, programmes and services which have an impact on children.

67. The Committee also emphasizes that the principle of non-discrimination, as provided under article 2 of the Convention, must be fully implemented. A more active approach should be taken to eliminate discrimination against certain groups, in particular girl children, children belonging to minorities and children born out of wedlock.

68. The Committee wishes to encourage the State party to further develop a systematic approach to increasing public awareness of the participatory rights of children in the light of article 12 of the Convention.

69. The Committee suggests that the State party adopt all appropriate measures, including awareness-raising among parents and communities, on the negative effects of early marriage on children.

70. In the light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to raise awareness among community leaders and parents to ensure that all children are registered at birth.

71. In the light of article 19 of the Convention, the Committee further recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including revision of legislation, to prevent and combat ill-treatment within the family and sexual abuse of children. It suggests, inter alia, that the authorities initiate a comprehensive study on abuse, ill-treatment and domestic violence to improve the understanding of the nature and the scope of the problem, and set up social programmes to prevent all types of child abuses as well as to rehabilitate the child victims. Law enforcement should be strengthened with respect to such crimes; adequate procedures and mechanisms to deal with complaints of child abuse should be developed, such as multidisciplinary teams to handle cases, special rules of evidence, and special investigators or community focal points.

72. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including legal ones, to ensure that children maintain contact with both parents in case of divorce or separation, as well as to ensure the recovery of maintenance for the child.

73. The Committee recommends that the legislation on adoption be brought into conformity with the provisions of article 21 and other related articles of the Convention. It further suggests that the State party ratify the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

74. The Committee suggests that the State party consider seeking further technical assistance to continue to strengthen its efforts to make primary health care accessible to all children, in particular at the district level. Concerted efforts are needed to combat malnutrition. The Committee further suggests that the State party promote adolescent health by strengthening reproductive health education and services to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS. The Committee also recommends that all appropriate measures be taken to prevent traffic accidents, such as teaching traffic rules at school.

75. In accordance with article 28 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party in its efforts to make free primary education available for all and to train teachers. It also encourages the State party to implement measures to improve school enrolment and pupil retention, especially of girls, children belonging to minorities and children living in rural areas. A system for the regular evaluation of the effectiveness of all educational measures taken, including those related to the quality of

teaching, must be ensured. The State party may wish to consider requesting further international assistance for the implementation of the measures identified for the full implementation of article 28.

76. The Committee strongly encourages the State party to seek long-term external financial assistance in order to build national capacity with regard to Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), to establish a sustainable clearing process in each area, to provide continual community awareness programmes, through schools, pagodas and local organizations, and to develop rehabilitation programmes. The Committee also suggests that a study be undertaken on the effects on children of toxic chemical contamination of soils and water as a result of the armed conflict, and that studies on this matter undertaken in neighbouring countries be consulted.

77. The Committee recommends that further measures be taken to implement the provisions of article 32, and that efforts be made to prevent and combat economic exploitation of the child or the performing of any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Particular attention should be paid to children working in the informal sector and with their families. The Committee further recommends that the State party harmonize the age of the end of compulsory education with the minimum age for work, by raising the former to 15. The Committee suggests that the State party consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the minimum age for employment. The Committee also suggests that the State party seek technical assistance from ILO in this area.

78. With regard to the increase in child prostitution and trafficking, the Committee recommends that measures be taken on an urgent basis, such as a comprehensive programme of prevention, including an awareness-raising and education campaign, in particular in the rural areas, and of rehabilitation of the victims. The State party is also invited to strengthen its efforts to control child pornography. Concerning the trafficking of boys and girls into neighbouring countries for work or prostitution, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to raise awareness in communities and establish vocational training for young people, in particular in rural areas. Cooperation with neighbouring countries is strongly encouraged.

79. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to prevent and combat drug and substance abuse among children, such as public information campaigns, including in schools. It also encourages the State party to support rehabilitation programmes dealing with children victims of drug and substance abuse. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to consider seeking technical assistance from competent international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO).

80. The Committee recommends that legal reform in the field of administration of juvenile justice be pursued and take fully into account the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40 as well as other relevant standards in this field such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. Particular attention should be paid to the prevention of juvenile delinquency, the protection of the rights of children

deprived of their liberty, respect for fundamental rights and legal safeguards in all aspects of the juvenile justice system and full independence and impartiality of the judiciary dealing with juveniles. The Committee also encourages the State party to explore alternatives to institutional care as well as traditional mechanisms of conciliation, as long as the principles and guarantees of the Convention are respected. The Committee also recommends that the State party avails itself of the technical assistance programmes of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations.

81. In the light of the areas of concern identified by the Committee and the recommendation made, in particular in education, health and protection, the Committee suggests that the State party consider seeking further technical assistance from relevant international organizations.

82. Finally, in light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the publication of these documents be undertaken, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee following its consideration of the report. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the National Assembly and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Australia

83. The Committee considered the initial report of Australia (CRC/C/8/Add.31) at its 403rd to 405th meetings (CRC/C/SR.403-405) on 24 and 25 September 1997, and adopted** the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

84. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its extensively detailed report, which has been prepared in full conformity with the Committee's guidelines, and for the submission of written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/AUS/1). The Committee notes with satisfaction the constructive and open dialogue it had with the delegation of the State party, and the detailed replies it received from the delegation during the dialogue. The Committee also notes the supplementary information provided by the delegation during and following the consideration of the report. The Committee regrets, however, that the State party did not include full information in its report on the External Territories that are administered by it. The Committee notes that article 2 of the Convention requires States parties to ensure the implementation of the Convention for areas under their jurisdiction, which therefore includes the obligation to report on progress achieved in all its territories.

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* At the 426th meeting, held on 10 October 1997.

B. Positive aspects

85. The Committee appreciates the State party's firm commitment to adopting measures for the implementation of the rights of the child as recognized in the Convention. The Committee notes specifically the wide range of welfare services for the benefit of children and their parents, the provision of universal and free education and the advanced health system.

86. The Committee notes the efforts by the State party in the field of law reform. The Committee welcomes the recent amendments to the Family Law Act, 1975 and the Crimes (Child Sex Tourism) Amendment Act, 1994.

87. The Committee welcomes the intention of the State party to ratify the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

88. Noting the long-standing efforts made by the State party in the field of international cooperation, the Committee would like to encourage the State party to achieve the 0.7 per cent of GDP target for international assistance to developing countries.

C. Principal subjects of concern

89. The Committee is concerned that although the Convention on the Rights of the Child has been declared a relevant international instrument under the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act, 1986, which enables the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission to refer to the Convention when it is considering complaints, this does not give rise to legitimate expectations that an administrative decision will be made in conformity with the requirements of that instrument. The Committee is also concerned that there is no right of citizens to launch complaints in the local courts on the basis of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

90. The Committee notes with concern the reservation made by the State party to article 37 (c) of the Convention. The Committee notes that this reservation might impede the full implementation of the Convention.

91. The Committee is concerned about the absence of a comprehensive policy for children at the federal level. It is also concerned by the lack of monitoring mechanisms at federal and local levels. Such mechanisms are of essential importance for the evaluation and promotion of the development of policies and programmes for the benefit of children. Disparities between the different states' legislation and practices, including budgetary allocations, are of concern to the Committee.

92. The Committee notes that the Convention and its principles are not generally known to the public, although the notion of rights is. The Committee regrets that there seems to be lack of adequate understanding in some quarters of the community of the principles of the Convention, as well as its holistic and interrelated approach, and the importance that the Convention places on the role of the family.

93. The Committee also expresses its concern that employment legislation on the federal level, as well as in all the states, does not specify minimum age(s) below which children are not allowed to be employed. The law also does not prohibit the employment of children who are still in compulsory education. The Committee is deeply concerned that the minimum age of criminal responsibility is generally set at the very low level of 7 to 10 years, depending upon the state.

94. The Committee is concerned that the general principles of the Convention, in particular those related to non-discrimination (article 2) and the respect for the views of the child (article 12) are not being fully applied.

95. While noting the information provided by the delegation of the State party on a number of programmes to raise health standards for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the State party's intention to start a two-year anti-racism campaign, the Committee is nonetheless concerned about the special problems still faced by Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, as well as by children of non-English-speaking backgrounds, with regard to their enjoyment of the same standards of living and levels of services, particularly in education and health.

96. The Committee is concerned that in some instances, children can be deprived of their citizenship in situations where one of their parents loses his/her citizenship.

97. The Committee expresses its concern about the lack of prohibition in local legislation of the use of corporal punishment, however light, in schools, at home and in institutions; in the view of the Committee this contravenes the principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular articles 3, 5, 6, 19, 28 (2), 37 (a), (c), and 39. The Committee is also concerned about the existence of child abuse and violence within the family.

98. The Committee is also concerned by local legislation that allows the local police to remove children and young people congregating, which is an infringement on children's civil rights, including the right to assembly.

99. The Committee is concerned that women working in the private sector are not systematically entitled to maternity leave, which could result in different treatment between children of State employees and those working in other sectors.

100. While noting the support services that are provided to homeless children, including housing, education and health services, the Committee remains concerned at the spread of homelessness amongst young people. The Committee is worried that this puts children at risk of involvement in prostitution, drug abuse, pornography, or other forms of delinquency and economic exploitation. The incidence of suicide among young people is an additional cause of concern to the Committee.

101. The Committee is concerned about the continued practice of female genital mutilation in some communities, and that there is no legislation prohibiting it in any of the states.

102. The Committee is concerned about the treatment of asylum seekers and refugees and their children, and their placement in detention centres.

103. The situation in relation to the juvenile justice system and the treatment of children deprived of their liberty is of concern to the Committee, particularly in the light of the principles and provisions of the Convention and other relevant standards such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty.

104. The Committee is also concerned about the unjustified, disproportionately high percentage of Aboriginal children in the juvenile justice system, and that there is a tendency normally to refuse applications for bail for them. The Committee is particularly concerned at the enactment of new legislation in two states, where a high percentage of Aboriginal people live, which provides for mandatory detention and punitive measures of juveniles, thus resulting in a high percentage of Aboriginal juveniles in detention.

D. Suggestions and recommendations

105. In the light of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 1993, the Committee encourages the State party to review its reservation to article 37 (c) with a view to its withdrawal. The Committee emphasizes that article 37 (c) allows for exemptions from the need to separate children deprived of their liberty from adults when that is in the best interests of the child.

106. The Committee recommends that the State party create a federal body responsible for drawing up programmes and policies for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and monitoring their implementation. The Committee suggests that cooperation in the field of the rights of the child between the authorities and non-governmental organizations as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities should also be further strengthened.

107. The Committee encourages the State party to allocate special funds in its international cooperation programmes and schemes to children. The Committee also encourages the State party to use the principles and provisions of the Convention as a framework for its programme of international development assistance.

108. The Committee suggests that the State party take all appropriate measures, including of a legislative nature, to prohibit corporal punishment in private schools and at home. The Committee also suggests that awareness-raising campaigns be conducted to ensure that alternative forms of discipline are administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the Convention. The Committee also believes that cases of abuse and ill-treatment of children, including sexual abuse within the family, should be properly investigated, sanctions applied to perpetrators and publicity given to decisions taken. Further measures should

be taken with a view to ensuring the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of the victims of abuse, neglect, ill-treatment, violence or exploitation, in accordance with article 39 of the Convention.

109. The Committee recommends that awareness-raising campaigns on the Convention on the Rights of the Child be conducted, with a particular focus on its general principles and on the importance the Convention places on the role of the family. The Committee suggests that the Convention be disseminated also in languages that are used by Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, and by persons from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The Committee also suggests that the rights of the child be incorporated in school curricula. It further recommends that the Convention be incorporated in the training provided to law enforcement officials, judicial personnel, teachers, social workers, care givers and medical personnel.

110. The Committee believes that there is a need for an awareness-raising campaign on the right of the child to participate and express his/her views, in line with article 12 of the Convention. The Committee suggests that special efforts be made to educate parents about the importance of children's participation, and of dialogue between parents and children. The Committee also recommends that training be carried out to enhance the ability of specialists, especially care givers and those involved in the juvenile justice system, to solicit the views of the child, and help the child express these views.

111. The Committee recommends that specific minimum age(s) be set for employment of children at all levels of government. The Committee suggests that there is also a need for clear and consistent regulations in all the states on maximum allowed work hours for working children who are above the minimum employment age. The Committee also encourages the State party to consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 concerning minimum age for employment. While acknowledging the fact that the federal Government is planning to harmonize the age of criminal liability and raise it in all the states to 10 years, the Committee believes that this age is still too low.

112. The Committee recommends that legislation and policy reform be introduced to guarantee that children of asylum seekers and refugees are reunified with their parents in a speedy manner. The Committee also recommends that no child be deprived of his/her citizenship on any ground, regardless of the status of his/her parent(s).

113. The Committee encourages the State party to review its legislation and make paid maternity leave mandatory for employers in all sectors, in the light of the principle of the best interests of the child and articles 18 (3) and 24 (2) of the Convention.

114. The Committee encourages the State party to take further steps to raise the standards of health and education of disadvantaged groups, particularly Aboriginals, Torres Strait Islanders, new immigrants, and children living in rural and remote areas. The Committee is also of the view that there is a need for measures to address the causes of the high rate of incarceration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. It further suggests that research be continued to identify the reasons behind this disproportionately

high rate, including investigation into the possibility that attitudes of law enforcement officers towards these children because of their ethnic origin may be contributing factors.

115. The Committee recommends that further research be carried out to identify the causes of the spread of homelessness, particularly among young persons and children, including, inter alia, the socio-economic background of the child and his/her family, and to identify any link between homelessness and child abuse, including sexual abuse, child prostitution, child pornography, and trafficking in children. The Committee also encourages the State party to adopt further policies of poverty alleviation, and to further strengthen the support services that it provides to homeless children.

116. The Committee recommends that specific laws be enacted to prohibit the practice of female genital mutilation and to ensure adequate implementation of the legislation. The Committee also recommends that further awareness-raising campaigns be conducted, in cooperation with the different communities, to sensitize them about the dangers and harm that result from this practice.

117. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the reports be published, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Uganda

118. The Committee considered the initial report of Uganda (CRC/C/3/Add.40) at its 409th and 410th meetings (CRC/C/SR.409-410) held on 29 and 30 September 1997 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

119. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for the submission of its initial report which followed the guidelines set by the Committee on the Rights of the Child as well as for the comprehensive written answers to its list of issues (CRC/C/UGA/1). The Committee also expresses its satisfaction to the State party for having engaged in an open and constructive dialogue with the Committee, and in particular for the self-critical and frank approach taken by the State party in its report and during the dialogue with the Committee. It welcomes the delegation's positive response to the suggestions and recommendations made during the course of the discussion.

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* At the 426th meeting, held on 10 October 1997.

B. Positive aspects

120. The Committee notes the establishment in 1992 of the National Council of Children and the adoption of the Uganda National Plan of Action for Children. It also welcomes the decentralization of the National Plan of Action for Children and, to this end, the adoption of 34 district plans of action for children. The Committee further notes with appreciation that alongside the legislative framework, the State party has carried out some studies and developed therefrom, inter alia, the decentralization policy.

121. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the State party enacted a new Constitution in 1995 and the Children's Statute in 1996 which incorporate specific provisions relating to children's rights; further, that the State party in the drafting of this legislation used the Convention on the Rights of the Child as one of the core documents so as to ensure full compatibility between the Constitution, the Children's Statute and the Convention. The Committee also notes that the State party is one of the seven African countries that has so far ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

122. The Committee welcomes the priority being given by the State party to health, in particular health care for children, including efforts to reduce child mortality, facilitate breastfeeding, support nutrition programmes, combat HIV/AIDS, eliminate female genital mutilation and increase access to clean drinking water.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

123. The Committee acknowledges that the severe political, economic and social difficulties facing the State party have had a negative impact on the situation of children. In particular, the Committee notes that poverty, armed conflict in the north and the HIV/AIDS pandemic have caused major difficulties.

124. Furthermore, the Committee notes that prejudicial traditional practices and customs, prevailing particularly in rural areas, hamper the effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention, especially with regard to the principles of non-discrimination, best interests of the child and respect for the views of the child.

D. Principal subjects of concern

125. The Committee, while noting with satisfaction the existence of the National Children's Council and various government bodies, ministries and Resistance Councils responsible for the welfare of children at the national and local levels, nevertheless regrets the inadequate coordination among these bodies in promoting and protecting the rights of the child and developing a comprehensive approach to the implementation of the Convention. It also regrets that the National Children's Council and the other bodies, ministries and councils lack the requisite institutional capacity, skills and financial resources to carry out their mandates.

126. Taking note of the recent achievements in the field of law reform, the Committee is concerned about the insufficiency of the measures taken by the State party to harmonize national legislation with the principles and provisions of the Convention. The Committee particularly notes with concern that current provisions concerning the definition of "child", "youthful offender" and "minor", as contained respectively in the Approved Schools Act, the Affiliation Act and the Marriage Act; the Reformatory Schools Act; and the Divorce Act, are incompatible with the provisions and principles of the Convention, especially with the principle of non-discrimination and in the areas of marriage, employment and juvenile justice. The Committee also remains concerned about the conflict between customary law and the principles and provisions of the Convention in these areas.

127. The Committee is concerned that no adequate measures have been taken for the systematic collection of disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data in all areas covered by the Convention, in relation to all groups of children, in urban and rural areas, in order to evolve targeted policies, evaluate progress achieved and assess the impact of policies adopted with respect to children. The Committee is also concerned about the State party's limited human and financial capacity to collect and process data, as well as to develop specific indicators to evaluate progress achieved and assess the impact of policies adopted on children, in particular the most vulnerable groups of children.

128. While acknowledging that efforts have been made by the State party to promote awareness of the provisions of the Convention through the print and electronic media, the schools and village campaigns, the Committee remains concerned that insufficient steps have been taken to promote awareness and understanding of the principles and provisions of the Convention. The Committee is concerned that the training on children's rights provided to all professional groups, including members of the police and security forces and other law enforcement officials, army officials, judicial personnel, magistrates, lawyers, teachers and school administrators at all levels of education, social workers, officials of central or local administrations and personnel of child-care institutions and health and medical personnel, is insufficient and unsystematic. Further, the Committee remains concerned that the Convention in its entirety has not been translated into any vernacular language.

129. The Committee notes the lack of adequate legislative, administrative and other measures to ensure the full implementation of children's economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of the State party's available resources, in particular for girls, orphans, children with disabilities, abandoned children, children born out of wedlock, children from single-parent families, children living and working on the street, and children victims of abuse and/or economic and sexual exploitation.

130. The Committee notes with concern that although the principles of the best interests of the child, respect for the views of the child, and the child's right to participate in family, school and social life are incorporated fully in the Constitution and the Children's Statute, they are not implemented in practice due to, inter alia, cultural norms, practices and attitudes.

131. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the persistence of discriminatory attitudes against some groups of children, especially girls, children with disabilities and children living in rural areas, which often results in limiting their access to basic social facilities such as health and education.

132. The Committee is concerned at the insufficiency of the measures to combat and prevent ill-treatment and abuse, including sexual abuse of children within the family, and at the lack of information on this matter. The Committee is further concerned that disciplinary measures in some schools and law enforcement institutions often involve corporal punishment, although this is prohibited by law.

133. The Committee is concerned that in many rural areas legislation relating to birth registration is not fully implemented, which may seriously disadvantage non-registered children in the enjoyment of their rights.

134. The Committee is concerned that despite the various immunization programmes, infant and child mortality rates are high due to, inter alia, poor water supply, hygiene and sanitation practices and endemic malnutrition. Further, the Committee is worried by the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS throughout the country and its devastating impact on children who are infected and affected.

135. While noting that the State party has made efforts towards introducing the principle of free and compulsory primary education by providing free education for four children per family, the Committee is concerned that this fundamental right is not yet fully and equally implemented throughout the country. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about the low level of school enrolment and the high drop-out rates for girls due to, inter alia, early marriage, the lack of learning and teaching facilities and materials, and the shortage of trained teachers.

136. The Committee is deeply concerned that the rules of international humanitarian law applicable to children in armed conflict are being violated in the northern part of the State party, in contradiction to the provisions of article 38 of the Convention. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned about the abduction, killings and torture of children occurring in this area of armed conflict and the involvement of children as child soldiers.

137. The Committee is concerned about the administration of juvenile justice, and in particular its compatibility with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention, as well as with other relevant international standards. The Committee remains particularly concerned about, inter alia, violations of the rights of children in detention centres, the remanding of children in adult prisons or police cells, long periods in custody, delays before trial, and the inadequacy of existing alternative measures to imprisonment.

138. The Committee is concerned about the difficulties encountered by refugee and displaced children in securing access to basic education, health and social services.

139. The Committee is concerned about the insufficiency of legal and other measures to prevent and combat the economic exploitation of children, especially child domestic workers and others in the informal sector.

140. While the fact that the State party has recently carried out a study on children working and/or living on the street is welcome, the recent increase in the number of such children is a matter of concern. The Committee also expresses its serious concern at the increase in the number of child prostitutes and the fact that the State party does not have a clear strategy to combat the abuse and sexual xploitation of children.

141. The Committee is also concerned at the insufficiency of the measures taken by the State party for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children victims of war and abuse and, further, that the existing alternative care institutions lack material and financial resources and specialized personnel.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

142. The Committee recommends that further steps be taken by the State party to strengthen the National Children's Council and the coordination between the various government bodies, ministries and Resistance Councils involved in the implementation of children's rights, at both national and local levels. Greater efforts should be made to ensure closer cooperation with non-governmental organizations working in the field of human and children's rights. Further, the State party should strengthen the human and financial capacity of the various governmental institutions promoting children's rights.

143. The Committee recommends that, in the context of the legal reform being undertaken by the State party in the field of children's rights, national legislation be harmonized and made fully compatible with the provisions and principles of the Convention. The Committee further recommends that the prescribed age in the various national laws be harmonized so as to eliminate inconsistences, contradictions and gender disparities, and that the national legislation be brought into conformity with the Convention. The State party may wish to request technical assistance in this regard.

144. The Committee also recommends that the State party review the system of data collection and analysis and identify appropriate disaggregated indicators with a view to addressing all areas of the Convention and all groups of children in society. The Committee further suggests that the State party consider requesting technical assistance in this regard from, among others, the United Nations Children's Fund.

145. The Committee recommends that greater efforts be made to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are widely known and understood by both adults and children, in particular in the rural community; further, systematic training and retraining programmes on the rights of the child should be organized for all professional groups including members of the police and security forces and other law enforcement officials, army officials, judicial personnel, lawyers, magistrates, teachers and school administrators at

all levels of education, social workers, officials of central or local administrations, personnel of child-care institutions, and health and medical personnel. The Committee further recommends that the Convention in its entirety be translated into vernacular languages.

146. The Committee recommends that priority be given in budget allocations to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, with particular emphasis on health and education and on the enjoyment of these rights by the most disadvantaged children.

147. The Committee further recommends that all appropriate measures, including public information campaigns, be undertaken to prevent and combat all forms of discrimination against girls, orphans, children with disabilities, abandoned children, children born out of wedlock, and children victims of abuse and/or sexual and economic exploitation, especially those living in rural areas, with a view, inter alia, to facilitating their access to basic services.

148. The Committee recommends that special efforts be directed to the development of an effective system of birth registration. Such a system would serve as a tool for children's enjoyment of their rights.

149. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including through international cooperation, to prevent and combat infant and child mortality and malnutrition. Further, the Committee suggests that the Government strengthen its information and prevention programmes to combat HIV/AIDS, particularly to prevent the transmission to children of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and to eliminate discriminatory attitudes towards children affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS. The Committee further recommends that the State party pursue and strengthen its family planning and reproductive health educational programmes, including for adolescents.

150. The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to ensure the implementation of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention. The Committee urges that greater efforts be directed to training teachers, improving learning and teaching facilities and the school environment, increasing enrolment and fighting school drop-out.

151. The Committee recommends that awareness of the duty to fully respect the rules of international humanitarian law, in the spirit of article 38 of the Convention, inter alia with regard to children, should be made known to the parties to the armed conflict in the northern part of the State party's territory, and that violations of the rules of international humanitarian law entail responsibility being attributed to the perpetrators. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party take measures to stop the killing and abduction of children and the use of children as child soldiers in the area of the armed conflict. While taking note of the regional initiatives already being undertaken, the Committee also recommends that, where appropriate, the State party liaise with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on children in armed conflict.

152. The Committee recommends that special attention be given to the problems of ill-treatment and abuse, including sexual abuse of children within the family and corporal punishment in schools, and stresses the need for information and education campaigns to prevent and combat the use of any form of physical or mental violence against children, in accordance with article 19 of the Convention. The Committee also suggests that comprehensive studies on these problems be initiated in order to understand them better and to facilitate the elaboration of policies and programmes to combat them effectively, including rehabilitation programmes.

153. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake a comprehensive reform of the system of juvenile justice in the spirit of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40, and of other United Nations standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. Particular attention should be paid to the right of children to prompt access to legal assistance and to a judicial review. Training programmes on the relevant international standards should be organized for all professionals involved with the juvenile justice system and specialized courts should be established country-wide as a priority matter. The Committee further suggests that the State party consider seeking technical assistance for this purpose from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations.

154. The Committee recommends that special attention be directed to refugee and internally displaced children to ensure that they have equal access to basic facilities.

155. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt a strategy to tackle the problem of children working and/or living on the street. The Committee further suggests that informal education programmes be designed and adopted to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children, especially child prostitution.

156. The Committee encourages the State party to give specific attention to monitoring the full implementation of labour laws in order to protect children from being economically exploited. It further suggests, inter alia, that the authorities adopt explicit legislation and measures to protect children from economic exploitation through employment as domestic servants and in other informal sectors, engage in research and collection of data, and promote integration and vocational training programmes. Additionally, the Committee suggests that the State party consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age for employment.

157. The Committee recommends that the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large, including children, and that the report be published, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate on and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Czech Republic

158. The Committee considered the initial report of the Czech Republic (CRC/C/11/Add.11) at its 411th to 413th meetings (CRC/C/SR.411-413), held on 30 September and 1 October 1997 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

159. The Committee welcomes the initial report and written answers to the list of issues (CRC/C/Q/CZE/1) submitted by the State party. The Committee expresses its satisfaction at the additional information provided by the State party in the course of the dialogue with the Committee, during which the representatives of the State party indicated, in a self-critical manner, not only the policy and programme directions, but also the difficulties encountered in implementing the Convention. The Committee also acknowledges the fact that the presence of a multidisciplinary delegation directly involved in the implementation of the Convention in the Czech Republic enabled it to engage in a fruitful and constructive dialogue.

B. Positive aspects

160. The Committee notes with satisfaction that the State party is currently carrying out a comprehensive law reform and welcomes the initiatives undertaken by the State party to further the protection of the family and children by drafting new legislation, such as the proposed Law on Social and Legal Protection of Children, and proposing amendments to existing legislation, including the Law on the Family, the Criminal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedures.

161. The Committee views positively the initiating by the State party of a training programme for judges, the police, and several government officials dealing with children's rights in order to increase their awareness about the principles and provisions of the Convention.

162. The Committee welcomes the initiative of the State party to establish a "Crisis Line for Children", which provides children with a means to report cases of sexual abuse and domestic violence.

163. The Committee notes with appreciation the longstanding achievements of the State party in the areas of education and medical care and welcomes its commitment to maintain these high standards.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

164. The Committee acknowledges that the State party has had to face economic, social and political challenges during the past few years. It notes that the transition to a market economy has led to increased rates of

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* At the 426th meeting, held on 10 October 1997.

unemployment, poverty and other social problems, and has had a serious impact on the welfare of the population, in particular on all vulnerable groups, including children.

D. Principal subjects of concern

165. While acknowledging the openness of the State party towards the possibility of reviewing its reservation to article 7, paragraph 1, of the Convention, the Committee remains concerned that this reservation might impede the full implementation of the Convention.

166. The Committee is concerned at the lack of an integrated strategy for children as well as of a systematic mechanism to monitor progress in all areas covered by the Convention and in relation to all groups of children in urban and rural areas, especially those affected by the consequences of economic transition.

167. The Committee is concerned about the need to strengthen the State party's limited capacity to develop specific disaggregated indicators to evaluate progress achieved and assess the impact of existing policies on all children, in particular children belonging to minority groups.

168. While noting with satisfaction the existence of government bodies dealing with the welfare of children at the national and local levels, the Committee nevertheless expresses its concern that the coordination among them needs to be improved in order to develop a comprehensive approach to the implementation of the Convention.

169. The Committee expresses its concern at inadequate coordination and communication mechanisms between the Government and the non-governmental organizations dealing with children's issues.

170. The Committee is concerned that the general principles of the Convention, as laid down in its articles 2 (non-discrimination), 3 (best interests of the child) and 12 (respect of the views of the child), are not being fully integrated into the legislative policies and programmes relevant to children, in particular in relation to children belonging to vulnerable categories such as children belonging to minorities, children with disabilities, children in institutions or deprived of liberty, children ill-treated and abused within the family, children who are victims of sexual exploitation, and children who live and/or work on the streets.

171. The Committee is concerned that sufficient measures have not been taken to disseminate and raise awareness about the principles and provisions of the Convention in all parts of society, among children and adults alike, in conformity with article 42 of the Convention.

172. The Committee is concerned that no adequate measures have been taken to prevent and combat all forms of discriminatory practices against children belonging to minorities, including Roma children, and to ensure their full access to health, education and other social services. The Committee is

concerned that the principles and provisions of the Convention are not fully respected as regards Roma children, in particular those who are in detention or otherwise institutionalized.

173. While acknowledging recent legal measures to resolve the situation of children, especially those placed in institutions or in foster homes, who were not registered for lawful permanent residence and were thereby denied the right to citizenship, the Committee remains concerned at the fact that children and care takers in such situations are not sufficiently informed about the procedures for applying for citizenship.

174. In the light of article 17 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned that sufficient mechanisms do not exist to protect children from harmful information, including violence and pornography in the media.

175. The Committee is concerned that corporal punishment is still used by parents and that internal school regulations do not contain provisions explicitly prohibiting corporal punishment, in conformity with articles 3, 19 and 28 of the Convention.

176. The Committee is worried about the increasing problems of environmental degradation in the State party, which have a harmful impact on the health of children.

177. In regard to the situation of children with disabilities, the Committee expresses its concern at the insufficient measures taken by the State party to ensure effective access of these children to health, education and social services, and to facilitate their full inclusion into society. The Committee is also concerned about the small number of well-trained professionals dealing with disabled children.

178. The Committee is concerned about the insufficiency of the measures taken to tackle issues of reproductive health and the incidence of early pregnancies.

179. The Committee expresses its concern that the measures, including legal ones, being taken to address the problems of child abuse, including sexual abuse within the family, and the sale and trafficking of children, child prostitution and child pornography are insufficient. The Committee is also concerned that, as referred to in the report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (E/CN.4/1997/95/Add.1), the State party may serve as a transit country for the trafficking of children.

180. The Committee expresses its concern at the phenomenon of children working and/or living on the street, and at the inadequate measures taken to tackle this issue.

181. The Committee expresses its concern at the rising incidence of gambling addiction, alcohol consumption and drug abuse among children and the insufficient preventive measures taken by the State party.

182. The system of the administration of juvenile justice, and in particular its compatibility with articles 37, 39, and 40 of the Convention and with other relevant standards such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, is a matter of concern to the Committee. The Committee remains particularly worried, inter alia, about the rights of the child to legal assistance and judicial review, that deprivation of liberty is not used only as a measure of last resort, and about the stigmatization of the most vulnerable categories of children, including those belonging to the Roma minority.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

183. In the light of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 1993, the Committee encourages the State party to review its reservation to article 7, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

184. The Committee takes note that a National Plan of Action has been drafted and encourages the State party to follow all the necessary steps to implement it. The Committee also recommends that the State party strengthen coordination between the various governmental mechanisms involved in children's rights, at both the national and local levels, with a view to developing a comprehensive policy on children and ensuring effective evaluation of the implementation. Moreover, the Committee encourages the State party to continue and strengthen its efforts to develop a close partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

185. The Committee encourages the State party to pursue its consideration of the establishment of an independent mechanism to monitor the observance of children's rights, such as an Ombudsperson or a National Commission for Children's Rights.

186. The Committee recommends that the State party give priority attention to the identification of appropriate disaggregated indicators with a view to addressing all areas of the Convention and all groups of children in society. Such mechanisms can play a vital role in systematically monitoring the status of children, and in evaluating progress achieved and difficulties hampering the realization of children's rights. They can be used as a basis for designing programmes to improve the situation of children, particularly the most disadvantaged, including children belonging to minorities, children with disabilities, children ill-treated and abused within the family, children in institutions or deprived of liberty, children who are victims of sexual exploitation and children who live and/or work on the streets.

187. The Committee recommends that further efforts be made to ensure that national laws conform fully with the Convention, having due regard to the principles of the best interests of the child, non-discrimination, respect for the views of the child, and his or her right to participate in family, school, other institutions and social life.

188. The Committee recommends that consideration be given to incorporating the Convention in the curricula of all educational institutions and that appropriate measures be taken to facilitate access by children to information

on their rights. The Committee also suggests that the State party direct further efforts to providing comprehensive training programmes for professional groups working with and for children such as judges, lawyers, law enforcement personnel, army officials, teachers, school administrators, social workers, and personnel of child-care institutions.

189. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake major efforts to develop awareness-raising campaigns aimed at reducing discriminatory practices against the Roma population and should envisage special programmes to improve the standard of living, education and health of Roma children.

190. The Committee recommends that the State party take further measures in accordance with article 7, paragraph 2, of the Convention, including measures to facilitate applications for citizenship, so as to resolve the situation of stateless children, especially those placed in institutions. The Committee also suggests that the State party consider acceding to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

191. The Committee recommends that the State party envisage plans to adopt reproductive health measures designed to reduce the incidence of pregnancies among teenage girls and strengthen its information and prevention programmes to combat HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STD). The Committee also recommends that the State party take adequate measures, including awareness-raising campaigns and the provision of support services to needy families, in order to prevent the abandonment of children and to protect poor single mothers from child traffickers.

192. The Committee recommends that further measures to protect children from abuse and maltreatment be undertaken, in particular through the development of a widespread public information campaign for the prevention of corporal punishment at home, at school, and in other institutions.

193. The Committee welcomes the intention of the State party to accede to the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption and recommends that appropriate steps be taken to ensure its entry into force.

194. In regard to children with disabilities, the Committee recommends that the State party develop early identification programmes to prevent disabilities, implement alternative measures to the institutionalization of disabled children, and envisage awareness-raising campaigns to reduce discrimination against disabled children and encourage their inclusion into society.

195. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake more comprehensive research on the possible effects of environmental pollution on the health of children.

196. The Committee suggests that the State party undertake a comprehensive study of child abuse and ill-treatment in the family. The Committee also recommends reinforcing its policies and programmes to prevent and combat all forms of sexual abuse, including domestic violence and incest. As regards

sexual exploitation of children, the Committee encourages the State party to take into consideration the recommendations of the 1996 Stockholm Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, as well as those of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

197. The Committee encourages the State party to envisage ratifying ILO Convention No. 138, regulating the minimum age for access to employment. Furthermore, in view of the increasing phenomenon of children living and/or working on the street, it recommends that efforts be strengthened to provide social support to such children.

198. The Committee recommends that the State party envisage undertaking a comprehensive reform of the system of juvenile justice in the spirit of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40, and of other United Nations standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. Particular attention should be paid to the right of children to prompt access to legal assistance. Training programmes on the relevant international standards should be organized for all professionals involved with the juvenile justice system and specialized courts should be established.

199. Finally, the Committee recommends that, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the initial report and written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the report be published, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Trinidad and Tobago

200. The Committee considered the initial report of Trinidad and Tobago (CRC/C/11/Add.10) at its 414th to 416th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.414-416), held on 2 and 3 October 1997, and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

201. The Committee expresses its appreciation to the State party for its initial report, which followed the guidelines set by the Committee, and written answers to the list of issues (CRC/C/Q/TRI/1). The Committee is encouraged by the frank, self-critical and cooperative tone of the dialogue, during which the delegation of the State party indicated policy and programme directions as well as difficulties encountered with regard to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention. The Committee, however, notes with regret that the report and the written answers did not provide statistical and disaggregated data.

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* At the 426th meeting, held on 10 October 1997.

B. Positive aspects

202. The Committee welcomes the State party's proposal to incorporate the National Plan of Action on Children (NPA) in the general development framework of the country.

203. The Committee notes with satisfaction the establishment of the Inter-Ministerial Committee to implement the NPA, as well as the National Family Services Division within the Ministry of Consumer Affairs and Social Services to monitor children at risk.

204. The Committee notes with satisfaction the low levels of child mortality and under-five mortality rates, as well as the positive indicators in the field of education.

205. The Committee welcomes the willingness of the State party to collaborate with non-governmental organizations and is encouraged by the subsidies that the State party grants to various national non-governmental organizations working towards the promotion and protection of children's rights within its territory.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

206. The Committee recognizes that severe economic constraints, due in particular to structural adjustment programmes, social difficulties and poverty, have had a negative impact on the situation of children. The Committee notes that the State party has gone through an economic recession in the last few years, which resulted in an acute increase in unemployment.

D. Principal subjects of concern

207. The Committee is concerned that the Convention is not an integral part of the national legislation and that national laws and regulations are not fully consistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention. While noting that the State party identified a number of areas in legislation that need to be reformed to bring them into conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention, the Committee is concerned that the measures adopted to harmonize national legislation with the principles and provisions of the Convention are insufficient. It also regrets that a number of legal provisions contrary to the Convention are still in force, including in the areas of administration of juvenile justice, minimum age of access to employment and minimum age for marriage.

208. The Committee regrets that coordination among the bodies promoting and protecting the rights of the child is inadequate and that a comprehensive approach to the implementation of the Convention is lacking. The Committee also regrets that these bodies lack the institutional capacity, skills and financial resources to carry out their mandates.

209. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient attention paid, at both national and local levels, to the need for an efficient monitoring mechanism that could provide a systematic and comprehensive compilation of disaggregated

data and indicators on all areas covered by the Convention and in relation to all groups of children, especially those who are victims of child abuse, ill-treatment or economic exploitation, girl children, children of single-parent families, children born out of wedlock, abandoned children, institutionalized and disabled children, children living and/or working in the streets and children involved with the juvenile justice system.

210. The Committee is concerned that the measures and programmes to ensure the implementation of children's economic, social and cultural rights to the maximum extent of available resources are inadequate. The Committee is also concerned at the lack of disaggregated data in relation to budgetary allocations for children.

211. The Committee expresses its concern at the lack of specific mechanisms to register and address complaints from children concerning violations of their rights under the law.

212. The Committee notes with concern that measures taken to ensure that the provisions and principles of the Convention are made widely known to adults and children alike, in accordance with article 42 of the Convention, are insufficient. Moreover, insufficient attention has been paid to the training of all professional groups working with or for children such as judges, lawyers, magistrates, law enforcement personnel, police officers, army officers, officials of the central and local administrations, health professionals, teachers, social workers, and personnel working in child-care and detention institutions.

213. The Committee is concerned that the State party has not yet taken fully into account in its legislation and policies the general principles of the Convention, in particular the principles of non-discrimination (art. 2), best interests of the child (art. 3), and respect for the views of the child (art. 12).

214. In the light of article 17 of the Convention, the Committee notes with concern that no adequate efforts exist to protect children from being exposed to harmful information, including violence, especially on television.

215. While noting the efforts undertaken by the State party, such as the enactment of the 1991 Domestic Violence Act as well as the establishment in 1997 of a multidisciplinary committee to review national legislation related to domestic violence in order to strengthen the protection of the victims, the Committee is concerned about the insufficient awareness and information on ill-treatment and abuse of children, including sexual abuse, both within and outside the family, and at the lack of appropriate measures and mechanisms to prevent and combat them. The lack of special structures for children victims of such abuses is also a matter of concern.

216. The Committee is deeply concerned by the use of corporal punishment within the family, at school and in care institutions, as well as at the absence of a law that clearly prohibits the use of both mental and physical torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment against children.

217. The Committee is concerned at the lack of qualified staff working in the care institutions. While taking note of the recent measures taken to improve the monitoring of care institutions, the Committee remains concerned about the persistence of reported cases of abuse.

218. The Committee is concerned at the high maternal mortality rate. The Committee is also concerned at the spread of HIV/AIDS and its impact on children, as well as at the insufficiency of measures to prevent early pregnancy.

219. While recognizing the efforts of the State party in the field of education, the Committee is concerned at the shortage of trained teachers and at the high pupil-teacher ratio.

220. The Committee is concerned about the new phenomena of homelessness and children living and/or working in the streets. While noting the efforts by the State party to provide services for these children, including the opening of a special home and the provision of education, the Committee remains concerned that this is not adequate to reach all children living and/or working in the streets.

221. The Committee is concerned by the increase in the economic exploitation of children, in particular those who work as street vendors. The Committee notes that the value attached by the community to education is a positive factor that helps to reduce the incidence of child labour. The Committee is also concerned at the low minimum age of access to employment, set at 12.

222. The situation in relation to the administration of juvenile justice, in particular its compatibility with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention as well as other relevant standards such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, is a matter of concern to the Committee. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the low minimum age of criminal responsibility. The Committee is also concerned that there are no requirements to present juveniles before a court in a speedy manner, and that flogging is allowed by the law as a means of punishment and corporal punishment is allowed as a means of discipline in detention centres. The Committee is also concerned that prison facilities are overcrowded, resulting in difficult living conditions for juvenile offenders, and that juvenile offenders do not always have access to education. The lack of facilities for girl juvenile offenders, which result in girls being detained with adult female offenders, is an additional source of concern to the Committee.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

223. The Committee recommends that, in the context of the legal reform being undertaken by the State party in the field of children's rights, national legislation be harmonized and made fully compatible with the provisions and principles of the Convention. Such reform should in particular address the areas of administration of justice, as well as the minimum ages for marriage, access to employment and criminal responsibility. The Committee further encourages the State party to pursue its efforts to strengthen the institutional framework designed to promote and protect human rights in

general and the rights of the child in particular. The Committee also recommends that awareness-raising programmes on children's rights be conducted for members of Parliament to assist them in incorporating the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the legislative reform.

224. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen coordination between the various governmental mechanisms involved in children's rights, at both the national and local levels, with a view to developing a comprehensive policy on children and ensuring effective evaluation of the implementation of the Convention in the country. The Committee encourages the State party to consider the establishment of an independent mechanism, such as an Ombudsperson for the rights of the child.

225. The Committee also recommends that the State party give priority attention to the development of a system of data collection and to the identification of appropriate disaggregated indicators with a view to addressing all areas of the Convention and all groups of children in society; the State party may wish to request technical assistance in this regard.

226. The Committee encourages the State party to pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention and to ensure adequate distribution of resources at both central and local levels. Budget allocations for the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights should be ensured to the maximum extent of available resources and in the light of the principle of the best interests of the child.

227. The Committee recommends that greater efforts be made to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are widely known and understood by both adults and children, in particular in the rural areas. Further, systematic training and in-service training programmes on the rights of the child should be organized for professional groups working with and for children, such as judges, lawyers, magistrates, law enforcement personnel, police officers, army officials, teachers, school administrators, health personnel, social workers, officials of central or local administrations, and personnel of child-care and detention institutions.

228. It is the Committee's view that further efforts must be undertaken to ensure that the general principles of the Convention not only guide policy discussions and decision-making, but also are appropriately integrated into any judicial and administrative decisions and in the development and implementation of all projects, programmes and services which have an impact on children.

229. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including legal ones, to protect children from harmful information, including in audio-visual media such as television.

230. In the light of article 19 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party further strengthen its efforts to prevent and combat ill-treatment and sexual abuse of children, within and outside the family. It suggests, inter alia, that the authorities initiate a comprehensive study on abuse, ill-treatment and domestic violence, to improve the understanding of

the nature and the scope of the problem, and strengthen social programmes to prevent all types of child abuse and to rehabilitate the child victims. Law enforcement should be strengthened against perpetrators of abuse, including sexual abuse; adequate procedures and mechanisms to deal with complaints of child abuse should be developed, such as the establishment of a family court.

231. In light of articles 3, 19 and 28 2, the Committee strongly recommends that corporal punishment within the family, at school and in care institutions be prohibited by law. It further recommends that the authorities develop and implement appropriate creative and socio-educational measures of discipline which respect all the rights of the child, as well as establish sensitization programmes for parents.

232. While noting the current efforts of the State party to revise its legislation on adoption, the Committee recommends that this legislation be brought into conformity with the provisions of article 21 and other related articles of the Convention. It further suggests that the State party consider ratifying the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.

233. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to monitor efficiently the institutions of alternative care and develop appropriate training for the staff of these institutions.

234. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt further measures to raise awareness on pre-natal services for women. The Committee suggests that the State party further promote adolescent health by strengthening reproductive health education and services to prevent and combat HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party develop measures to better include children with disabilities in society.

235. In the area of education, the Committee suggests that further steps be taken to ensure the full implementation of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention. The Committee recommends that greater efforts be directed to training teachers and improving the school environment. The State party may wish to consider requesting further international assistance in this area.

236. The Committee recommends that research be undertaken on the phenomenon of the children living and/or working in the streets. The Committee also recommends an increase in the number of outreach programmes providing services to these children, including education, and that such services be provided in the different parts of the country.

237. The Committee recommends that research be conducted to determine the extent of the problem of child economic exploitation and its causes. The Committee regards this to be essential in helping to determine future policies in that regard. The Committee welcomes the fact that an interministerial committee is looking into the possibility of ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 concerning the minimum age for admission to employment, and the Committee encourages the State party to ratify it. While noting the efforts by the State party in poverty alleviation, the Committee encourages the State party to further increase its poverty alleviation programmes and schemes, and to further strengthen its social welfare system.

238. The Committee recommends that legal reform in the field of the administration of juvenile justice be pursued, taking fully into account the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40, as well as other relevant standards in this field such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty. In particular, the Committee recommends that the minimum age of criminal responsibility be raised. The Committee also recommends that the State party provide alternatives to detention, as well as special facilities for girl child offenders. The Committee also recommends that corporal punishment in detention as a means of discipline, and flogging as a means of punishment, be abolished in the legislation and in practice.

239. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report and the written replies presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that these documents be published, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee following its consideration of the report. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

Concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Togo

240. The Committee considered the initial report of Togo (CRC/C/3/Add.42) at its 420th to 422nd meetings (CRC/C/SR.420-422), held on 7 and 8 October 1997 and adopted* the following concluding observations:

A. Introduction

241. The Committee welcomes the submission of the initial report of Togo and also expresses its appreciation with regard to the dialogue held with the State party. While the Committee expresses its satisfaction with the additional oral information provided by the State party in the course of the dialogue, it nevertheless regrets that it did not receive in written form answers to the list of issues (CRC/C/Q/TOGO/1) submitted by the Committee.

B. Positive aspects

242. The Committee notes that the State party adopted in 1992 a new Constitution which includes provisions that promote and protect human rights. It also notes the establishment of a National Human Rights Commission (1987) and a Ministry for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (1992). The Committee also welcomes the fact that the 1992 Constitution guarantees the superiority of international human rights instruments which are incorporated into national legislation and that those treaties can be invoked before courts. Furthermore, it welcomes the willingness of the State party to envisage ratifying the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

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* At the 426th meeting, held on 10 October 1997.

243. The Committee welcomes the establishment in 1993 of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children.

244. The Committee notes with appreciation the steps taken by the State party to translate into Kabyè and Ewé the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

245. The Committee welcomes the emergence of national non-governmental organizations and the steps to enhance cooperation between them and the Government.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

246. The Committee notes that Togo is among the group of least developed countries and that a large part of its population is living below the poverty level. Furthermore, the Committee notes that certain traditional practices and customs, prevailing particularly in rural areas, hamper the effective implementation of the provisions of the Convention, especially with regard to the girl child.

D. Principal subjects of concern

247. The Committee notes with concern that currently several provisions of the national legislation, inter alia in the areas of civil rights, including right to nationality, as well as adoption, labour and juvenile justice, are not in conformity with the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

248. While noting the establishment of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children, the Committee remains concerned about the lack of human and financial resources and the institutional status of the National Committee. In this regard, the Committee is concerned about the National Committee's capacity to effectively coordinate programmes and policies both between concerned ministries as well as between central and local levels. Furthermore, the Committee is worried that the State party has not yet adopted a National Plan of Action (NPA).

249. The Committee is concerned at the lack of a systematic mechanism to monitor progress in all areas covered by the Convention, and in relation to all groups of children in urban and rural areas. The Committee is also concerned about the State party's limited capacity to collect and process data, as well as specific indicators, to evaluate progress achieved and assess the impact of policies adopted on children, in particular the most vulnerable groups of children.

250. With regard to the implementation of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee notes with concern the absence of policies and measures to fully guarantee economic, social and cultural rights of children to the maximum extent of available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cocperation.

251. The Committee is concerned at the lack of harmonization in the State party between the different legal minimum ages and their compatibility with the provisions and principles of the Convention, in particular its articles 1 and 2.

252. In the light of article 2 of the Convention, the Committee remains concerned about the persistence of discriminatory practices against some groups of children, especially girls and disabled children, as well as children living in rural areas, which often results in limited access to basic social facilities, such as health and education.

253. Concern is expressed by the Committee at the insufficiency of the measures taken to ensure the effective implementation of the general principles of non-discrimination (article 2), the best interests of the child (article 3), the right to life, survival and development (article 6) and respect for the views of the child (article 12) of the Convention in relation to legal, judicial and administrative decisions, as well as to the political decision-making process.

254. The Committee expresses its concern regarding the lack of sufficient awareness of the principles and provisions of the Convention in all parts of society, among adults and children alike. It is also concerned at the lack of sufficient training for professional groups working with or for children, such as judges, lawyers, magistrates, law enforcement personnel, army officials, teachers, school administrators, health personnel, social workers, officials of central or local administrations and personnel of child-care institutions.

255. In relation to article 7 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned that in many cases children are not registered at birth, and that the enjoyment by non-registered children of their rights might be seriously hindered.

256. The Committee is concerned at the fact that corporal punishment is a common practice in the family, in schools and in other institutions. In this regard, the Committee is worried by the absence of a comprehensive law that clearly prohibits corporal punishment of children.

257. In the light of article 17 of the Convention, the Committee notes with concern that no mechanism exists to protect children from being exposed to harmful information, including pornography.

258. With regard to the right of the child to express his/her views (article 12) and his/her right to freedom of expression (article 13), the Committee is concerned at the prevailing attitudes in the family, in school, in other institutions and in society that hinder the enjoyment of those rights.

259. The Committee is also concerned at the increase in the number of children living and/or working in the streets in major cities. The Committee is further concerned by the lack of statistical data and studies on such children.

260. With regard to adoption, the Committee is concerned by the absence of a comprehensive legal framework that fully conforms to article 21 and the other relevant provisions of the Convention.

261. In the light of article 19 of the Convention, the Committee is worried about the persistence of child abuse, including ill-treatment within the family, and the absence at the administration level of an appropriate mechanism to prevent and combat this phenomenon.

262. The Committee is concerned at the difficult health situation faced by a majority of children, inter alia, high under-five child mortality rate, weak nutritional status, high incidence of malaria and iodine deficiency, and limited access to clean water and safe sanitation. It is also worried by the spread of HIV/AIDS throughout the population of the country, which bears a direct impact on the lives of children. The incidence of early pregnancies is also a matter of concern.

263. The Committee remains concerned at traditional attitudes and harmful practices, in particular female genital mutilation, which still prevail in some regions.

264. With regard to the right to education (articles 28 and 29), while noting that the principle of free, universal and compulsory basic education for all children is recognized by the State party, the Committee is concerned at the low level of school enrolment and the high drop-out rate, especially among girls, resulting in high illiteracy rates, the lack of learning and teaching facilities and the shortage of trained teachers, particularly in rural areas. Furthermore, in the light of article 31 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned at the lack of appropriate playgrounds.

265. In the light of articles 2, 3 and 22 of the Convention, the Committee is concerned about the absence of a legal framework to protect refugee and internally displaced children. The Committee is also concerned that a refugee child has to reach the age of 18 years to acquire Togolese citizenship.

266. The Committee is concerned about the insufficiency of legal and other measures to adequately prevent and combat economic exploitation of children, especially in the informal sector. The Committee is also seriously worried by the widespread sale and trafficking of children which result in their economic and sexual exploitation.

267. The Committee is concerned at the recent emergence of substance abuse among children and the limited prevention and rehabilitation measures and facilities to combat this phenomenon.

268. The Committee is concerned at the absence of comprehensive information and data concerning sexual abuse and exploitation of children, including in the family and when serving as domestic workers.

269. The situation in relation to the administration of juvenile justice and in particular its compatibility with articles 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention, as well as other relevant international standards, is a matter of concern. The Committee remains particularly concerned about, inter alia, the violations

of the rights of the child in detention centres, especially when not separated from adult detainees, the length and conditions of pre-trial detention, the existence of only one judge for minors and one centre specifically for boys in conflict with the law, the lack of access to legal assistance and the inadequacy of existing alternative measures to imprisonment.

E. Suggestions and recommendations

270. The Committee recommends that the State party initiate a comprehensive study on the compatibility of national legislation with the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child with a view to engaging in a law-reform process which would result in the enactment of a comprehensive children's code. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the State party may wish to seek technical assistance.

271. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen coordination among the various governmental bodies and mechanisms involved in children's rights, at both the national and local levels, with a view to developing a comprehensive policy on children and ensuring effective evaluation of the implementation of the Convention. The Committee encourages the State party to pursue its efforts to strengthen the institutional framework designed to promote and protect human rights in general and the rights of the child in particular. In this regard, it recommends that the role and resources of the National Committee for the Protection and Promotion of Children be reinforced. It encourages the State party to increase its cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

272. The Committee also recommends that the State party give priority attention to the development of a system of data collection and analysis, as well as to the identification of appropriate disaggregated indicators, with a view to addressing all areas of the Convention and all groups of children in society. Such mechanisms can play a vital role in systematically monitoring the status of children and evaluating the progress achieved and the difficulties hampering the realization of children's rights. They can be used as a basis for designing programmes to improve the situation of children, particularly those belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, including disabled children, the girl child, children ill-treated and abused within the family and in other institutions, children deprived of liberty, children living in rural areas, children who are victims of sexual exploitation, refugee children and children living and/or working in the streets. It is further suggested that the State party request international cooperation in this regard from, among others, the United Nations Children's Fund.

273. In the light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that priority be given in budget allocations to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, with particular emphasis on health and education, and on the enjoyment of these rights by children, particularly the most disadvantaged. In this regard, the Committee suggests that the State party envisage reallocating resources towards fully implementing the Convention.

274. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to fully harmonize legal minimum ages with the provisions and principles of the Convention.

275. The Committee further recommends that all appropriate measures be undertaken by the State party, including public information campaigns, to prevent and combat all forms of prevailing discriminatory attitudes against girls and children with disabilities, especially those living in rural areas, with a view, inter alia, to facilitating their access to basic services.

276. It is the Committee's view that further efforts must be undertaken to ensure that the general principles of the Convention, in particular the best interests of the child (article 3) and the participation of children (article 12), not only guide policy discussions and formulation and decision-making, but also are appropriately reflected in any judicial and administrative decisions and in the development and implementation of all projects and programmes which have an impact on children.

277. The Committee recommends that the State party launch a systematic information campaign, for both children and adults, on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Consideration should be given to the incorporation of the Convention in the curricula of educational institutions, and appropriate measures should be taken to facilitate access by children to information produced on their rights. Special attention should also be given to sensitize community and religious leaders about the Convention, especially its general principles. The Committee also suggests that, within the framework of the existing technical assistance programme with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the State party further engage its efforts towards developing comprehensive training programmes for professional groups working with and for children such as judges, lawyers, magistrates, law enforcement personnel, army officials, teachers, school administrators, health personnel, social workers, officials of central or local administrations and personnel of child-care institutions.

278. The Committee recommends that special efforts be developed to guarantee an effective system of birth registration, in the light of article 7 of the Convention, to ensure the full enjoyment of their fundamental rights by all children. Such a system would serve as a tool in the collection of statistical data, in the assessment of prevailing difficulties and in the promotion of progress in the implementation of the Convention.

279. In the light of articles 3, 19 and 28 (2), the Committee strongly recommends that corporal punishment be explicitly prohibited by law and that information campaigns be launched to appropriately sensitize adults on the dangers and harms of the practice. The Committee further recommends that the legislation protecting children from violence be amended in accordance with the provisions and principles of the Convention.

280. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including legal ones, to protect children from harmful information, including in the audio-visual media and in media using new technologies.

281. In the light of articles 12 and 13 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to promote and guarantee the right of the child to freedom of expression at home, in school, in other institutions and in society.

282. With a view to fully protecting the rights of children in the framework of adoption, the Committee recommends that the State party review its adoption laws in the light of article 21 of the Convention. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party consider ratifying the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption of 1993.

283. With a view to combating all forms of child abuse, especially ill-treatment within the family, the Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including law enforcement and rehabilitation measures.

284. The Committee encourages the State party to undertake to prevent and combat the phenomenon of children working and/or living in the streets by, inter alia, engaging in research and collection of data, promoting integration and vocational training programmes, and guaranteeing equal access to health and social services.

285. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures, including through international cooperation, to prevent and combat under-five mortality, malnutrition, malaria and iodine deficiency, and to improve access to clean water and safe sanitation.

286. The Committee suggests that the State party strengthen its information and prevention programmes to combat HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases (STD), as well as discriminatory practices towards children affected or infected by HIV/AIDS. The Committee further recommends that the State party pursue and strengthen its family planning and reproductive health programmes, including for adolescents.

287. The Committee shares the view of the State party that serious efforts are required to address harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation. Taking note of the current efforts undertaken to draft specific legislation to prohibit the practice of female genital mutilation, the Committee encourages the rapid enactment of such a law which is fully compatible with the Convention. It also recommends that public campaigns involving all sectors of society, including traditional leaders, be developed and pursued with a view to changing attitudes. In this regard, all appropriate action should be taken on a priority basis.

288. In accordance with article 28 (a) of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party in its efforts to make primary education compulsory and available free to all. It also encourages the State party to implement measures to improve school enrolment and school retention, especially for girls. A system for the regular evaluation of the effectiveness of these and other educational measures, including quality of teaching, must be ensured. In the spirit of article 29 of the Convention, further steps should be taken to develop guidelines for the participation of all children in the life of the

school, in conformity with the principles and provisions of the Convention. Furthermore, the State party is encouraged to provide more appropriate playgrounds for children.

289. In the spirit of articles 2, 3 and 22 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party make all appropriate efforts to ensure easy and full access to basic services, including in the areas of education, health and social services, to refugee children living under its jurisdiction.

290. The Committee encourages the State party to give specific attention to monitoring the full implementation of labour laws and ILO Convention No. 138 regarding the minimum age for employment in order to protect children from being economically exploited, especially as domestic servants. It further suggests that the authorities adopt legislation and measures to protect children from exploitation through child labour in the informal sector. The Committee also recommends that the State party take appropriate measures, including cooperation agreements with neighbouring countries, to prevent and combat the trafficking and sale of children.

291. With a view to preventing and combating drug and substance abuse among children, the Committee recommends that the authorities take all appropriate measures, such as public information campaigns, including in schools and in other institutions. It also encourages the State party to support all rehabilitation programmes dealing with children victims of drug and substance abuse. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to consider seeking technical assistance from relevant international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO).

292. In the light of article 34 and other related articles of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party reinforce its legislative framework to fully protect children from all forms of sexual abuse or exploitation, including within the family. It also recommends that the authorities undertake studies with a view to designing and implementing appropriate policies and measures, including in the areas of law enforcement and rehabilitation, to combat this phenomenon comprehensively and effectively. The Committee wishes in this regard to draw the attention of the State party to the recommendations formulated in the Agenda for Action adopted at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children held in Stockholm in 1996.

293. The Committee recommends that the State party envisage undertaking a comprehensive reform of the juvenile justice system in the spirit of the Convention, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40, and of other United Nations standards in this field, such as the Beijing Rules, the Riyadh Guidelines and the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty. Particular attention should be paid to protecting the rights of children deprived of their liberty, especially guaranteeing their separation from adult detainees, reducing the length of pre-trial detention, increasing the number of judges for minors and the number of specific rehabilitation centres for boys as well as for girls in conflict with the law, giving access to legal assistance and promoting alternative measures to imprisonment. Training programmes on the relevant international standards should be organized for all professionals involved with the juvenile justice system.

The Committee further suggests that the State party consider seeking and reinforcing existing technical assistance for this purpose from, among others, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division of the United Nations.

294. Finally, in the light of article 44, paragraph 6, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the initial report presented by the State party be made widely available to the public at large and that the report be published, along with the relevant summary records and the concluding observations adopted thereon by the Committee. Such a document should be widely distributed in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring within the Government, the Parliament and the general public, including concerned non-governmental organizations.

IV. OVERVIEW OF THE OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE COMMITTEE

A. Methods of work of the Committee

1. Support to the Committee

295. The Committee noted with satisfaction that the Plan of Action developed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights to strengthen the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and provide the additional support that the Committee required in view of its heavy workload and the increasing backlog building up in the consideration of States parties reports had become operational. A team of four staff members had already started assisting the expert members of the Committee in carrying out their tasks. The Plan of Action, which is financed through voluntary contributions, aims at increasing the existing team providing assistance to the Committee, in particular with regard to the preliminary analysis of reports submitted by States parties on the implementation of the Convention, the preparation of substantive background papers and the follow-up to the Committee's recommendations. It has been envisaged as operating for an initial period of three years, and has succeeded in obtaining financing for its first year. A fifth staff member may be recruited in the future as additional resources become available.

2. Individual communications

296. The Committee reaffirmed that in the absence of a specific mandate for the Committee to consider individual communications concerning alleged violations of the Convention, such a procedure could only be envisaged in the light of the spirit of dialogue and as part of the reporting process established by the Committee. (See also the previous discussions of the Committee on the issue of an urgent action procedure, A/49/41, paras. 372-381.) The Committee decided that whenever serious cases brought before it were of relevance to any other treaty body or human rights mechanism established by the Commission on Human Rights, they would be brought to the attention of those bodies. At the same time, such cases could also be taken into account in the framework of the consideration of States parties' reports whenever those reports were scheduled for consideration by the Committee.

B. Review of developments relevant to the work of the Committee

297. During the session, the Committee was informed by members about various meetings in which they had participated.

298. The Chairperson, Mrs. Sandra Prunella Mason, informed the Committee about the main decisions taken and recommendations made by the eighth meeting of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, which had met in Geneva from 15 to 19 September 1997 (see A/52/507, annex).

299. The Chairperson and Mr. Youri Kolosov also provided the Committee with an account of a consultation on monitoring and reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child organized by Asianet and UNICEF which was held in Suva, Fiji, from 25 to 29 August 1997 which they had attended.

300. During the consultation, Government officials and non-governmental organization representatives from 13 Pacific States parties to the Convention, as well as observers from Australia, discussed the reporting and monitoring procedures and mechanisms under the Convention. During the week preceding the consultation, Ms. Mason visited Samoa, where she held discussions with a number of government officials including the Secretary of Foreign Affairs, the Commissioner of Labour, the Director of Women Affairs and the Director of Health. From 20 to 22 August 1997, Mr. Kolosov visited the Solomon Islands where he met with members of Parliament, representatives of local non-governmental organizations and the National Advisory Committee for Children.

301. The Chairperson and Mr. Kolosov further informed the Committee about their visit to Australia, at the invitation of Defence for Children International (DCI)-Australia, between 1 and 5 September 1997. The two members visited Sydney and Canberra where they participated in the National Seminar on Child Rights and held meetings with the Federal Attorney General, representatives of UNICEF-Australia, members of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC), the Australian Law Reform Commission, the HREOC Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Social Justice Unit, the Attorney-General's Department, Commonwealth officers from a range of Commonwealth departments, and the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties of the Parliament.

302. Mrs. Judith Karp briefed the Committee about a conference organized by the Centre for Refugee Studies, York University, that she had attended in Toronto, Canada, from 22 to 24 June 1997 on "Enforcing International Human Rights Law: The Treaty System in the 21st Century". Participants included members of the six treaty bodies, representatives of specialized agencies and United Nations organs and bodies, as well as representatives from Governments, non-governmental organizations and regional organizations. The aim of the conference was to address the problem of implementation faced by the human rights treaty system and to develop a vision for the advancement of the treaty regime.

303. Mrs. Nafsiah Mboi reported on her domestic and international activities related to the work of the Committee since the last meeting. Ongoing work in connection with Indonesia's current efforts to develop a national institution for child protection involved a number of presentations to government/ community workshops on the Convention and the concept of ombudsman or ombudsman-like approaches to child protection. She gave numerous TV and press interviews and informal briefings for two Ministers, and held regular discussions with the competent working group. In a lecture entitled "Global Leadership through Conventions", given at the World Health Organization Fourth International Conference on Health Promotion (24 July), she presented the Convention and distributed the text. At a regional meeting of 700 midwives in Indonesia (9 August), she explained the principles of the Convention. She also gave briefings and held meetings with selected members of Parliament and officials of the Department of Labour to call attention to the principles of the Convention relating to child labour in the context of the debate on a new Indonesian labour law. The law was approved by Parliament in September and included provisions relating to children which were in

harmony with the Convention and relevant ILO conventions. Presidential acceptance of the parliamentary version of the law was expected shortly.

304. Mrs. Awa N'Deye Ouedraogo informed the Committee about her participation in a seminar on reporting on the implementation of the Convention, organized in Abidjan from 15 to 18 September 1997 by the Regional Office of UNICEF for Western and Central Africa. Government officials, representatives from UNICEF, specialized agencies and United Nations bodies as well as non-governmental organizations participated in the seminar, the purpose of which was to increase technical expertise and provide an opportunity to share experiences relevant to the reporting process. Among the recommendations adopted by the seminar was the suggestion that the Committee on the Rights of the Child should enhance the effectiveness of the reporting process through the elaboration of an explanatory note about the contents of the reporting guidelines.

305. Mrs. Lisbeth Palme mentioned an introductory lecture on the Convention that she had given on 2 September 1997 at the Stockholm School of Theology, and her participation, on 15 September 1997, in a Round Table on Human Rights organized at Lund University by the United Nations Associations of Lund and Malmö, the local Amnesty International Group, the Lund Association of Foreign Affairs and the Centre for Writers of South Sweden.

306. Mr. Ghassan Salim Rabah informed the Committee about his participation in various seminars and training courses on the rights of the child in Lebanon.

C. Cooperation with United Nations and other competent bodies

307. During the session, the Committee held a meeting with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies as well as other competent bodies in the framework of its ongoing dialogue with these bodies in the light of article 45 of the Convention.

308. The representative of the International Labour Organization recalled the importance attached by the ILO to the work of the Committee and in particular its concluding observations, which were taken into account whenever relevant to ILO's mandate. In this regard, the impact of the observations at the national level was undeniable, as illustrated by the recent ratification by a number of States of ILO Convention No. 138. The principles and provisions of the Convention were also a valuable legal framework for the activities of the International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour. Further progress had been made in the elaboration of a new instrument to combat the most intolerable forms of child labour. A report, based on answers to the questionnaire that had been sent to Governments on the content of such a new instrument and on which the comments of the Committee had been received, would soon be finalized. The new instrument would aim at identifying the most intolerable forms of child labour which should be abolished, under three main categories: situations of slavery and servitude; illicit activities such as the use of children in drug trafficking, pornography and sexual exploitation; and dangerous jobs which were harmful to the health and development of the child. The new instrument would also determine measures to be taken to ensure the abolition of these intolerable forms of child labour, including penal

sanctions, as well as modalities for international cooperation and solidarity to allow for successful implementation. The representative also referred to the international conference on child labour which was to be convened from 27 to 30 October in Oslo by the Government of Norway, in collaboration with ILO and UNICEF. It was expected that the outcome of the conference, which would focus on international cooperation for the progressive eradication of child labour, would be useful in the preparation of the new ILO convention.

309. The representative of the NGO Group for the Rights of the Child indicated the intention of the Group to convene at the next session of the Committee an informal meeting on its ongoing cooperation with the Committee. In the area of child labour, a survey was currently underway by the NGO subgroup on child labour to collect the views of NGOs on the new ILO instrument.

D. General discussion on the rights of children with disabilities

310. In the light of rule 75 of its provisional rules of procedures, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has decided periodically to devote one day of general discussion to a specific article of the Convention or to a theme in the area of the rights of the child in order to enhance understanding of the content and implications of the Convention.

311. At its fourteenth session, the Committee decided to devote its next day of general discussion to the issue of "The rights of children with disabilities", to be held on 6 October 1997.

312. In an outline prepared to guide the general discussion, the Committee stressed that throughout history children with disabilities had been, and in many societies still were denied access to education, family life, adequate health care, opportunities for play or for training, and the right to participate in "normal" childhood activities. In spite of the fact that these children were experiencing a form of social exclusion representing a denial of their basic rights as enshrined in the Convention, their plight rarely figured high on the national or international agenda, and they tended to remain invisible. The Committee also had a clear role to play in creating opportunities to highlight the obligations undertaken by Governments with respect to children with disabilities under the Convention, as well as the extent to which the rights of children with disabilities were violated. The thematic debate would mainly address the provisions of article 23 of the Convention, but would also reflect the holistic approach of the Convention, illustrating and reinforcing the interdependence and indivisibility of all the human rights of children.

313. The Committee identified three main issues to be considered during the day of general discussion:

(a) The right to life and development;

(b) Self-representation and full participation;

(c) The right of children with disabilities to inclusive education.

314. As for the previous thematic discussions, the Committee had invited representatives of United Nations organs, bodies and specialized agencies, and other competent bodies, including non-governmental organizations, research and academic organizations, individual experts and children, to contribute to the discussion.

315. Several organizations and individual experts submitted documents and other contributions on the theme. The list of these contributions is contained in annex IV.

316. Representatives of the following bodies and organizations participated in the day of general discussion:

Government bodies

Ministry for Social Protection of Togo, Permanent Mission of Aliens Appeal Board of Sweden, Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations Office at Geneva, Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations Office at Geneva.

Regional bodies

Inter-American Children's Institute of the Organization of American States.

United Nations entities and specialized agencies

International Labour Organization, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Special Rapporteur of the Commission for Social Development on Disability, UNAIDS, United Nations Children's Fund, United Nations Development Programme, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, World Bank.

Non-governmental organizations

ATD-Fourth World, Childrights Research Institute, Children's Rights Office (UK), Christian Children's Fund, Defence for Children International (DCI), DCI-Benin, DCI-Colombia, DCI-Israel, DCI-Japan, DCI-Paraguay, DICAG (South Africa), Die Lebenshilfe Wien, Disabled Children Action Group South Africa, Disabled Peoples' International, Epoch Worldwide (UK), Federation for the Protection of Children's Human Rights (Japan), German National Coalition, Handicap Collectif région Annecy, Handicap International, Inclusion International, International Catholic Child Bureau, International Council of Women, International Federation of Social Workers, International Save the Children Alliance, International Service for Human Rights, Japan Federation of Bar Associations, International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, Kuong Teila Graduate School of International Development, NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Save the Children (South Africa), Save the Children (Sweden), Save the Children (UK), Save the Children (Yugoslavia), Swedish Organization of Handicapped International Aid Foundation, Women's World Summit Foundation, World Federation of Methodist Women, Zonta International.

Other organizations

International Committee of the Red Cross

Mr. Bruce Adamson, Ms. Dulce P. Estrella-Gust, Mr. Sanford Fox and Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn also participated, as did children and adults with disabilities and parents of children with disabilities. Ms. Gerison Lansdown, Director of the Children's Rights Office (UK), was designated as the Rapporteur for the day of general discussion.

317. The meeting was opened by Ms. Mason, Chairp[illegible]n of the Committee, who expressed the hope that the discussion would lea[illegible] concrete action. The morning was devoted to statements by the Rappo[illegible]r of the Committee, who gave an introduction to the subject, and Mr. Bengt Lindqvist, Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Social Development on Disabilities. Representatives of various United Nations and other international agencies/bodies offered their comments and shared their experiences and views on the subject.

318. Invited speakers introduced the three previously identified sub-themes, as follows:

Sub-theme	Speaker(s)
Right to life, survival and development	Ms. Rachel Hurst, Disabled People's International
Right to self-representation and full participation	Ms. Pearl Makutaone and Ms. Chantal Rex, two disabled young girls from South Africa
Right to inclusive education	Ms. Lena Saleh, UNESCO and Ms. Sue Stubbs, Save the Children (UK)

319. Mrs. Mboi opened her introductory remarks at the afternoon session by emphasizing that in discussing the rights of children with disabilities, the main concern must always be the best interests of the whole child, not just the disability. The rights of children with disabilities were in no way confined to article 23; rather, the provisions of that article were intended to ensure that the disabled child had maximum opportunity to fulfil all the rights set out in the Convention. She pointed out that society's responsibility to protect children from disabilities must start well before birth and involved concern for all the circumstances which might result in disability at the time of birth. The challenges of protection ran throughout the life of a child and included the right to protection against violence in wartime or in peace, and protection against debilitating disease, poor nutrition and health, environmental pollution, harmful/hazardous child labour, etc. The challenge for the meeting was therefore twofold: how to protect children from becoming disabled, and how to ensure that those with disabilities were dealt with fairly, effectively and compassionately. She concluded by expressing the hope that the theme day would start a process which would lead to the development of practical guidance for Governments on strategies and policies to strengthen and accelerate movement towards

comprehensive fulfilment of all the rights set forth in the Convention by disabled children and to protection against disability both before and after birth, the construction of a set of indicators by which Governments and others could measure progress towards fulfilment of those rights.

320. Mr. Lindqvist pointed out some differences and the complementarity between the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96 of 20 December 1993). The Convention he saw as an important statement of principles protecting the rights of all children, including the disabled. The Standard Rules was a whole document on disability policy, containing a much higher degree of specification giving more guidance on what should be done and how it should be done. Elaborating further the nature of "disability policy", he suggested that measures to combat exclusion and bad conditions, to be effective, must be taken in two main areas - support to the individual and measures to create accessibility. Emphasizing the importance of closer cooperation between himself and the Committee, he made seven concrete suggestions of possible areas for cooperation including various kinds of information-sharing, collaborative analysis of country reports, advocacy and public education. In closing, he urged that thought be given to finding ways to ensure active participation by disabled young people and discussion of the problems of disabled youth at a United Nations international youth forum scheduled to take place in August 1998.

321. The representative of the ILO spelled out in some detail child labour as a major source of disability in children and indicated some of ILO's long-standing and ongoing work directed towards the elimination of harmful and hazardous child labour. The UNICEF representative gave highlights of its programmes to advance the rights of children with disabilities. The WHO representative provided some current data and information about its work. Other representatives also commented on the issue of the rights of the disabled from the perspective of their areas of expertise.

322. Ms. Hurst spoke about the right to life, survival and development, citing the need to oppose with great force the abortion of unborn babies known to be handicapped and provide support as needed for the disabled child to live and develop fully in accordance with his/her rights as set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Ms. Makutaone and Ms. Rex spoke of their personal experience as handicapped young people and advocated persuasively for the right to self-representation and full participation. They presented themselves as examples of the happy outcome which was possible if disabled children were given love, care and training in appropriate surroundings. Ms. Saleh and Ms. Stubbs discussed the importance of the right to inclusive education.

323. In the course of the afternoon the issue of protection against disability both for the unborn and after birth was discussed from various perspectives. It was pointed out that, in the developing world, where most of the world's disabled children lived, programmes as diverse and "conventional"

such as national immunization for children, good pre-natal and birthing services for mothers, and nutritional improvement programmes must be recognized as important activities in support of children's right to development and to be protected against disability.

324. At the end of the discussion, Ms. Lansdown, Rapporteur for the day of discussion, presented a summary of the main issues raised during the day, as described in the following paragraphs.

325. The issue under discussion was not about victims or about pity, but rather about challenging oppression and discrimination; it was about disabled children experiencing widespread abuse of their fundamental human rights.

326. It was important that the scale of the problems experienced by disabled children be acknowledged. The statistics were shocking: huge numbers of children were disabled by the physical, social and economic world that adults had created - by war, poverty, child labour, violence and abuse, environmental pollution, lack of access to health care. The world was a dangerous place for many children and adults had a responsibility to work towards the elimination of the factors which contributed to their harm. The disabilities faced by many children were not inevitable; they could and must be tackled.

327. The humanity behind the statistics must not be lost sight of. The contribution by the two young women from South Africa illustrated that by failing to respect their rights to inclusion and participation, the disabled are too often condemned to social isolation, loneliness, lack of friendships, denial of a voice and, indeed, often also a lack of love.

328. Behind the statistics and the denial of many of the rights of disabled children throughout the world lay attitudes which viewed the life of a disabled child as being of less worth, less importance and less potential than that of an able-bodied child. Those attitudes must be challenged. This required political action at every level, including legal reform to end all forms of discrimination, public education programmes, practical action to support families and communities in challenging prejudice and social exclusion, campaigns to raise awareness of the human rights of disabled children, programmes to end institutionalization of children, and positive images of disabled children in the media. It was also important to engage religious and community leaders as advocates in this process of change.

329. All children had the right to life. Failure to take all necessary measures to promote the survival and development of disabled children on an equal basis with other children represented a profound violation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. All children were equal members of the human race, discriminatory laws which denied their right to life should be repealed. Public debate should take place on the unspoken assumption, underlying much medical and scientific research, that we should be striving towards the goal of perfection in human beings. It was one thing to work to eliminate impairment but quite another to eliminate the person with the impairment. We must be clear what we mean when we talk about prevention. It

was of course vitally important to work towards the creation of a safer world for children in which the risks of impairment and harm were minimized, but the solution was not through the denial of life itself as a preventive strategy. Rather, we must celebrate diversity and learn to celebrate the birth of every child, with or without disability.

330. There was a need to develop strategies to ensure that the rights of disabled children were respected, both as individuals and as a group. Every child should have access to the necessary medical care and treatment, to education, to help with independent living, to a wheelchair if needed. We also therefore needed to change the physical environment to promote the active inclusion of all disabled children in society. This would involve, for example, the development of accessible transport and accessible buildings - shops, schools, play centres, offices.

331. We must take a holistic approach to disability. All the rights in the Convention must be considered in respect of disabled children, and disabled children should be considered when examining the implementation of all the rights in the Convention. That message should be applied by the Committee in its examination of States parties reports, Governments when implementing the Convention and non-governmental organizations and other agencies in promoting and monitoring implementation of the Convention. The Convention provides a framework of principles for monitoring law, policy and practice in respect of disabled children. The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities provided a source of detailed guidance on what should be done and how to do it. Those two documents should be used by the Committee and others as complementary tools in promoting the rights of disabled children.

332. Action must be taken at every level - international, regional, national, local and community - to effectively promote the rights of disabled children. At the international level, the Committee had a clear role to play by rigorously scrutinizing States parties reports, highlighting the situation of disabled children, and promoting the application of the Standard Rules. We could also learn from exchange of experience, research, expertise and information, and good practice between countries.

333. Action also needed to be taken to support the families of disabled children, promote access to education, train teachers to work in inclusive schools, enhance access to adequate health care, and provide practical help within villages and local communities. Such action would necessarily include legal reform, development of policies to promote opportunities for disabled children, reconsideration of budgets and reallocation of resources.

334. Disabled children, like other children, had a right to participate in decisions that affected them, but they suffered a double denial of this right. Many adults found it difficult to recognize both the right and the capacity of any child to contribute effectively to decision-making; where the child was disabled, there tended to be an even deeper inability to accept its competence. This was compounded by protectiveness on the part of carers which

sought to shield the children from the responsibility of participation. It was imperative to begin to explore ways of challenging the lack of belief in disabled children. There were many reasons for promoting more active participation in their own lives. First, decisions made about or on behalf of a child would be better informed and more likely to produce positive outcomes if the child him or herself was involved in the process. The views, experiences and knowledge of the child must be an important part of any planning or decision-making. Second, the process of participation was a central part of learning to take responsibility, to make decisions, to develop self-esteem and confidence. It was hard for any child to learn those skills if no confidence is ever placed in him or her by adults; it was profoundly more difficult for a disabled child who faced prejudice and exclusion every day of his or her life and who was constantly confronted by a self-image defined by society as negative and of little worth. It was therefore even more important that disabled children exercise their right to participate actively. Finally, by denying children the right to be heard we were denying them citizenship; they became non-people. Children whose voices were not heard or listened to were vulnerable to abuse, violence and exploitation by adults because they had no means of challenging their oppression. Disabled children were significantly more likely to suffer sexual abuse than able-bodied children, precisely because adults could act with impunity.

335. The inclusion of disabled children was a right, not a privilege. There was an important distinction between integration and inclusion. Policies of integration tended to seek to change the child in order to fit into the school. Inclusion, on the other hand, sought to change the school environment in order to meet the needs of the disabled child. Inclusive education needed to be introduced as part of a strategy for promoting an inclusive society. Marginalization and exclusion of disabled children were often defended on grounds of cost-effectiveness. However, such arguments could not be sustained when the question was turned around: can we afford the costs of exclusion? The loss to societies throughout the world of failure to include disabled children was huge: all their potential productive capacity was wasted. We also lost a potential for enrichment through their contribution to the social, creative, cultural and emotional dimensions of society. Inclusion was not an expensive luxury, but rather an opportunity for all children to become productive members of society. Indeed, failure to promote the inclusion of disabled children sometimes reflected less a lack of resources and more a lack of political will. It was often those Governments claiming to be least able to promote the rights of disabled children that were spending a significant proportion of the country's wealth on armaments and other military expenditures.

336. The final message of the discussion was that the time for talking was over. Now it was time for action.

337. Words of thanks to all the participants, delivered in the name of the Committee by Mrs. Karp, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, concluded the thematic day. She said that the thematic day had proved to be not only a stimulating process that brought many new insights, but also a very moving

experience due especially to those who had shared with the participants their own personal stories and experiences. Inclusion was the goal, but it was as well a means to improve society. The aim was to have a society which accommodated a wide spectrum of individual abilities, and not a society which simply expected all to conform to one hypothetical, and often unachieved, standard of "normally". The key issue was respect for the human dignity of children with disabilities. Inclusion of children with disabilities into society was part of a process of social change to make a society in which human dignity was a living value.

338. On the basis of the discussions on the various issues, the following recommendations were formulated by the Chairperson of the Committee:

(a) In its examination of States parties reports, the Committee should commit itself to highlighting the situation of disabled children and the need for concrete measures to ensure recognition of their rights, in particular the right to life, survival and development, the right to social inclusion and to participation; it should also emphasize that adequate monitoring of the situation of disabled children in all States must be undertaken and encourage moves to promote the collection of statistics and other information to enable constructive comparisons between regions and States;

(b) The Committee should consider the possibility of drafting a general comment on disabled children;

(c) The various bodies providing information to the Committee in the course of the reporting process should ensure that the information they provide includes disabled children;

(d) States should review and amend laws affecting disabled children which are not compatible with the principles and provisions of the Convention, for example legislation

(i) Which denies disabled children an equal right to life, survival and development (including - in those States which allow abortion - discriminatory laws on abortion affecting disabled children, and discriminatory access to health services);

(ii) Which denies disabled children the right to education;

(iii) Which compulsorily segregates disabled children in separate institutions for care, treatment or education;

(e) States should actively challenge attitudes and practices which discriminate against disabled children and deny them equal opportunities to the rights guaranteed by the Convention, including infanticide, traditional practices prejudicial to health and development, superstition, perception of disability as a tragedy;

(f) In view of the appalling impact of armed conflict, which disables hundreds of thousands of children, States should be encouraged to ratify the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction, due to be opened for signature in Ottawa in December 1997;

(g) The Committee should promote the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities as being relevant for full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and strengthen its cooperation with the Special Rapporteur on Disabilities and his panel of experts;

(h) The Committee, in cooperation with UNESCO, UNICEF and other relevant agencies, should ensure that inclusive education is included on the agendas of meetings, conferences and seminars as an integral part of debates concerning education;

(i) Relevant agencies should be encouraged to develop programmes which promote alternatives to institutionalization and to develop and promote strategies to deinstitutionalize children;

(j) The rights and interests of disabled children should be included on the agenda of multi- and bilateral agencies, development agencies, donor agencies, funding organizations such as the World Bank and regional banks, as well as technical cooperation agencies;

(k) Research into the provision of statistics and empirical evidence should be promoted with a view to: (i) promoting awareness of the extent to which the right to life of disabled children is denied; (ii) challenging the widespread existence of superstition, prejudice, social stigma and denial of access to education in relation to disabled children; (iii) challenging the argument of "cost-effectiveness" used to marginalize disabled children and evaluating the costs of exclusion and lost opportunities; (iv) bringing the issue to prominence in the process of drafting and adopting conventions on bio-ethics;

(l) Disabled children should be consulted, involved in decision-making and given greater control over their lives; existing good practices should be publicized and shared, and appropriate training materials devised;

(m) Governments should be encouraged to make these materials available at the community level in appropriate forms for children and disabled people; this could potentially be undertaken by one of the development agencies such as the Swedish Organization of Handicapped International Aid Foundation or Save the Children, in collaboration with some of the disabled peoples' organizations;

(n) Training materials on promoting the participation of disabled children should be produced. The UNICEF International Child Development Centre (Innocenti Centre) should be requested to produce an edition in its series of information digests on the subject of inclusion, as its contribution to the issues raised during the general discussion.

339. In view of the various contributions made and the importance of the issues considered, the Committee felt that there was a need to ensure follow-up to the general discussion. It was decided to set up a working group on the rights of children with disabilities including members of the Committee, representatives of relevant United Nations bodies and agencies and non-governmental organizations of disabled people, including disabled children, to consider further the various recommendations made and elaborate a plan of action to facilitate the concrete implementation of the various proposals. The Committee decided to pursue further the question of the mandate, composition and activities of the working group at its next session in January 1998.

V. DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE SEVENTEENTH SESSION

340. The following is the draft provisional agenda for the sixteenth session of the Committee:

1. Adoption of the agenda.

2. Organizational and other matters.

3. Submission of reports by States parties in accordance with article 44 of the Convention.

4. Consideration of reports of States parties.

5. Cooperation with other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and other competent bodies.

6. Methods of work of the Committee.

7. Future meetings of the Committee.

8. Other matters.

9. Biennial report of the Committee on its activities.

VI. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT

341. At its 426th meeting, held on 10 October 1997, the Committee adopted the draft report on its sixteenth session.

Annex I

STATES WHICH HAVE RATIFIED OR ACCEDED TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 10 OCTOBER 1997 (191)

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession a/	Date of entry into force
Afghanistan	27 September 1990	28 March 1994	27 April 1994
Albania	26 January 1990	27 February 1992	28 March 1992
Algeria	26 January 1990	16 April 1993	16 May 1993
Andorra	2 October 1995	2 January 1996	1 February 1996
Angola	14 February 1990	5 December 1990	4 January 1991
Antigua and Barbuda	12 March 1991	5 October 1993	4 November 1993
Argentina	29 June 1990	4 December 1990	3 January 1991
Armenia		23 June 1993 a/	22 July 1993
Australia	22 August 1990	17 December 1990	16 January 1991
Austria	26 January 1990	6 August 1992	5 September 1992
Azerbaijan		13 August 1992 a/	12 September 1992
Bahamas	30 October 1990	20 February 1991	22 March 1991
Bahrain		13 February 1992 a/	14 March 1992
Bangladesh	26 January 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Barbados	19 April 1990	9 October 1990	8 November 1990
Belarus	26 January 1990	1 October 1990	31 October 1990
Belgium	26 January 1990	16 December 1991	15 January 1992
Belize	2 March 1990	2 May 1990	2 September 1990
Benin	25 April 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Bhutan	4 June 1990	1 August 1990	2 September 1990
Bolivia	8 March 1990	26 June 1990	2 September 1990
Bosnia and Herzegovina b/			6 March 1992
Botswana		14 March 1995 a/	13 April 1995
Brazil	26 January 1990	24 September 1990	24 October 1990
Brunei Darussalam		27 December 1995 a/	26 January 1996
Bulgaria	31 May 1990	3 June 1991	3 July 1991
Burkina Faso	26 January 1990	31 August 1990	30 September 1990
Burundi	8 May 1990	19 October 1990	18 November 1990
Cambodia	22 September 1992	15 October 1992	14 November 1992
Cameroon	25 September 1990	11 January 1993	10 February 1993

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a/ Accession.

b/ Succession.

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Canada	28 May 1990	13 December 1991	12 January 1992
Cape Verde		4 June 1992 a/	4 July 1992
Central African Republic	30 July 1990	23 April 1992	23 May 1992
Chad	30 September 1990	2 October 1990	1 November 1990
Chile	26 January 1990	13 August 1990	12 September 1990
China	29 August 1990	2 March 1992	1 April 1992
Colombia	26 January 1990	28 January 1991	27 February 1991
Comoros	30 September 1990	22 June 1993	21 July 1993
Congo		14 October 1993 a/	13 November 1993
Cook Islands		6 June 1997 a/	6 July 1997
Costa Rica	26 January 1990	21 August 1990	20 September 1990
Côte d'Ivoire	26 January 1990	4 February 1991	6 March 1991
Croatia b/			8 October 1991
Cuba	26 January 1990	21 August 1991	20 September 1991
Cyprus	5 October 1990	7 February 1991	9 March 1991
Czech Republic b/			1 January 1993
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	23 August 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Democratic Republic of Congo	20 March 1990	27 September 1990	27 October 1990
Denmark	26 January 1990	19 July 1991	18 August 1991
Djibouti	30 September 1990	6 December 1990	5 January 1991
Dominica	26 January 1990	13 March 1991	12 April 1991
Dominican Republic	8 August 1990	11 June 1991	11 July 1991
Ecuador	26 January 1990	23 March 1990	2 September 1990
Egypt	5 February 1990	6 July 1990	2 September 1990
El Salvador	26 January 1990	10 July 1990	2 September 1990
Equatorial Guinea		15 June 1992 a/	15 July 1992
Eritrea	20 December 1993	3 August 1994	2 September 1994
Estonia		21 October 1991 a/	20 November 1991
Ethiopia		14 May 1991 a/	13 June 1991
Fiji	2 July 1993	13 August 1993	12 September 1993

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Finland	26 January 1990	20 June 1991	20 July 1991
France	26 January 1990	7 August 1990	6 September 1990
Gabon	26 January 1990	9 February 1994	11 March 1994
Gambia	5 February 1990	8 August 1990	7 September 1990
Georgia		2 June 1994 a/	2 July 1994
Germany	26 January 1990	6 March 1992	5 April 1992
Ghana	29 January 1990	5 February 1990	2 September 1990
Greece	26 January 1990	11 May 1993	10 June 1993
Grenada	21 February 1990	5 November 1990	5 December 1990
Guatemala	26 January 1990	6 June 1990	2 September 1990
Guinea		13 July 1990 a/	2 September 1990
Guinea-Bissau	26 January 1990	20 August 1990	19 September 1990
Guyana	30 September 1990	14 January 1991	13 February 1991
Haiti	20 January 1990	8 June 1995	8 July 1995
Holy See	20 April 1990	20 April 1990	2 September 1990
Honduras	31 May 1990	10 August 1990	9 September 1990
Hungary	14 March 1990	7 October 1991	6 November 1991
Iceland	26 January 1990	28 October 1992	27 November 1992
India		11 December 1992 a/	11 January 1993
Indonesia	26 January 1990	5 September 1990	5 October 1990
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	5 September 1991	13 July 1994	12 August 1994
Iraq		15 June 1994 a/	15 July 1994
Ireland	30 September 1990	28 September 1992	28 October 1992
Israel	3 July 1990	3 October 1991	2 November 1991
Italy	26 January 1990	5 September 1991	5 October 1991
Jamaica	26 January 1990	14 May 1991	13 June 1991
Japan	21 September 1990	22 April 1994	22 May 1994
Jordan	29 August 1990	24 May 1991	23 June 1991
Kazakstan	16 February 1994	12 August 1994	11 September 1994
Kenya	26 January 1990	30 July 1990	2 September 1990
Kiribati		11 December 1995 a/	10 January 1996
Kuwait	7 June 1990	21 October 1991	20 November 1991
Kyrgyzstan		7 October 1994	6 November 1994
Lao People's Democratic Republic		8 May 1991 a/	7 June 1991
Latvia		14 April 1992 a/	14 May 1992

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Lebanon	26 January 1990	14 May 1991	13 June 1991
Lesotho	21 August 1990	10 March 1992	9 April 1992
Liberia	26 April 1990	4 June 1993	4 July 1993
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		15 April 1993 a/	15 May 1993
Liechtenstein	30 September 1990	22 December 1995	21 January 1996
Lithuania		31 January 1992 a/	1 March 1992
Luxembourg	21 March 1990	7 March 1994	6 April 1994
Madagascar	19 April 1990	19 March 1991	18 April 1991
Malawi		2 January 1991 a/	1 February 1991
Malaysia		17 February 1995 a/	19 March 1995
Maldives	21 August 1990	11 February 1991	13 March 1991
Mali	26 January 1990	20 September 1990	20 October 1990
Malta	26 January 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Marshall Islands	14 April 1993	4 October 1993	3 November 1993
Mauritania	26 January 1990	16 May 1991	15 June 1991
Mauritius		26 July 1990 a/	2 September 1990
Mexico	26 January 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Micronesia (Federated States of)		5 May 1993 a/	4 June 1993
Monaco		21 June 1993 a/	21 July 1993
Mongolia	26 January 1990	5 July 1990	2 September 1990
Morocco	26 January 1990	21 June 1993	21 July 1993
Mozambique	30 September 1990	26 April 1994	26 May 1994
Myanmar		15 July 1991 a/	14 August 1991
Namibia	26 September 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Nauru		27 July 1994 a/	26 August 1994
Nepal	26 January 1990	14 September 1990	14 October 1990
Netherlands	26 January 1990	6 February 1995	7 March 1995
New Zealand	1 October 1990	6 April 1993	6 May 1993
Nicaragua	6 February 1990	5 October 1990	4 November 1990
Niger	26 January 1990	30 September 1990	30 October 1990
Nigeria	26 January 1990	19 April 1991	19 May 1991
Niue		20 December 1995 a/	19 January 1996
Norway	26 January 1990	8 January 1991	7 February 1991
Oman		9 December 1996 a/	8 January 1997
Pakistan	20 September 1990	12 November 1990	12 December 1990

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Palau		4 August 1995 a/	3 September 1995
Panama	26 January 1990	12 December 1990	11 January 1991
Papua New Guinea	30 September 1990	1 March 1993	31 March 1993
Paraguay	4 April 1990	25 September 1990	25 October 1990
Peru	26 January 1990	4 September 1990	4 October 1990
Philippines	26 January 1990	21 August 1990	20 September 1990
Poland	26 January 1990	7 June 1991	7 July 1991
Portugal	26 January 1990	21 September 1990	21 October 1990
Qatar	8 December 1992	3 April 1995	3 May 1995
Republic of Korea	25 September 1990	20 November 1991	20 December 1991
Republic of Moldova		26 January 1993 a/	25 February 1993
Romania	26 January 1990	28 September 1990	28 October 1990
Russian Federation	26 January 1990	16 August 1990	15 September 1990
Rwanda	26 January 1990	24 January 1991	23 February 1991
Saint Kitts and Nevis	26 January 1990	24 July 1990	2 September 1990
Saint Lucia		16 June 1993 a/	16 July 1993
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	20 September 1993	26 October 1993	25 November 1993
Samoa	30 September 1990	29 November 1994	29 December 1994
San Marino		25 November 1991 a/	25 December 1991
Sao Tome and Principe		14 May 1991 a/	13 June 1991
Saudi Arabia		26 January 1996 a/	25 February 1996
Senegal	26 January 1990	31 July 1990	2 September 1990
Seychelles		7 September 1990 a/	7 October 1990
Sierra Leone	13 February 1990	18 June 1990	2 September 1990
Singapore		5 October 1995 a/	4 November 1995
Slovakia b/			1 January 1993
Slovenia b/			25 June 1991
Solomon Islands		10 April 1995 a/	10 May 1995
South Africa	29 January 1993	16 June 1995	16 July 1995
Spain	26 January 1990	6 December 1990	5 January 1991

States	Date of signature	Date of receipt of instrument of ratification/ accession	Date of entry into force
Sri Lanka	26 January 1990	12 July 1991	11 August 1991
Sudan	24 July 1990	3 August 1990	2 September 1990
Suriname	26 January 1990	1 March 1993	31 March 1993
Swaziland	22 August 1990	7 September 1995	6 October 1995
Sweden	26 January 1990	29 June 1990	2 September 1990
Switzerland	1 May 1991	24 February 1997	26 March 1997
Syrian Arab Republic	18 September 1990	15 July 1993	14 August 1993
Tajikistan		26 October 1993 a/	25 November 1993
Thailand		27 March 1992 a/	26 April 1992
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia b/			17 September 1991
Togo	26 January 1990	1 August 1990	2 September 1990
Tonga		6 November 1995 a/	6 December 1995
Trinidad and Tobago	30 September 1990	5 December 1991	4 January 1992
Tunisia	26 February 1990	30 January 1992	29 February 1992
Turkey	14 September 1990	4 April 1995	4 May 1995
Turkmenistan		20 September 1993 a/	19 October 1993
Tuvalu		22 September 1995 a/	22 October 1995
Uganda	17 August 1990	17 August 1990	16 September 1990
Ukraine	21 February 1991	28 August 1991	27 September 1991
United Arab Emirates		3 January 1997 a/	2 February 1997
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	19 April 1990	16 December 1991	15 January 1992
United Republic of Tanzania	1 June 1990	10 June 1991	10 July 1991
Uruguay	26 January 1990	20 November 1990	20 December 1990
Uzbekistan		29 June 1994 a/	29 July 1994
Vanuatu	30 September 1990	7 July 1993	6 August 1993
Venezuela	26 January 1990	13 September 1990	13 October 1990
Viet Nam	26 January 1990	28 February 199	2 September 1990
Yemen	13 February 1990	1 May 1991	31 May 1991
Yugoslavia	26 January 1990	3 January 1991	2 February 1991
Zambia	30 September 1990	5 December 1991	5 January 1992
Zimbabwe	8 March 1990	11 September 1990	11 October 1990

Annex II

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Name of member	Country of nationality
Mr. Francesco Paolo FULCI**	Italy
Mrs. Judith KARP*	Israel
Mr. Youri KOLOSOV*	Russian Federation
Miss Sandra Prunella MASON*	Barbados
Mrs. Nafsiah MBOI**	Indonesia
Mrs. Esther Margaret Queen MOKHUANE**	South Africa
Mrs. Awa N'Deye OUEDRAOGO*	Burkina Faso
Mrs. Lisbeth PALME*	Sweden
Mr. Ghassan Salim RABAH**	Lebanon
Mrs. Marilia SARDENBERG**	Brazil

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* Term expires on 28 February 1999.

** Term expires on 28 February 2001.

Annex III

STATUS OF SUBMISSION OF REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 10 OCTOBER 1997

Initial reports due in 1992

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Bangladesh	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	15 November 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.38 and Add.49
Barbados	8 November 1990	7 November 1992	12 September 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.45
Belarus	31 October 1990	30 October 1992	12 February 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.14
Belize	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	1 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.46
Benin	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	22 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.52
Bhutan	2 September 1990	1 September 1992		
Bolivia	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	14 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.2
Brazil	24 October 1990	23 October 1992		
Burkina Faso	30 September 1990	29 September 1992	7 July 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.19
Burundi	18 November 1990	17 November 1992		
Chad	1 November 1990	31 October 1992	14 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.50
Chile	12 September 1990	11 September 1992	22 June 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.18
Costa Rica	20 September 1990	20 September 1992	28 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.8
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	13 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.41
Democratic Republic of the Congo	27 October 1990	26 October 1992		
Ecuador	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	11 June 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.44
Egypt	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	23 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.6
El Salvador	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	3 November 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.9 and Add.28
France	6 September 1990	5 September 1992	8 April 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.15
Gambia	7 September 1990	6 September 1992		

Initial reports due in 1992 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Ghana	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 November 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.39
Grenada	5 December 1990	4 December 1992	24 September 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.55
Guatemala	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	5 January 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.33
Guinea	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.48
Guinea-Bissau	19 September 1990	18 September 1992		
Holy See	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	2 March 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.27
Honduras	9 September 1990	8 September 1992	11 May 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.17
Indonesia	5 October 1990	4 October 1992	17 November 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.10 and Add.26
Kenya	2 September 1990	1 September 1992		
Mali	20 October 1990	19 October 1992	2 April 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.53
Malta	30 October 1990	29 October 1992		
Mauritius	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	25 July 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.36
Mexico	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	15 December 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.11
Mongolia	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	20 October 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.32
Namibia	30 October 1990	29 October 1992	21 December 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.12
Nepal	14 October 1990	13 October 1992	10 April 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.34
Nicaragua	4 November 1990	3 November 1992	12 January 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.25
Niger	30 October 1990	29 October 1992	27 April 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.29
Pakistan	12 December 1990	11 December 1992	25 January 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.13
Paraguay	25 October 1990	24 October 1992	30 August 1993 and 13 November 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.22 and Add.47
Peru	4 October 1990	3 October 1992	28 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.7 and Add.24
Philippines	20 September 1990	19 September 1992	21 September 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.23
Portugal	21 October 1990	20 October 1992	17 August 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.30
Romania	28 October 1990	27 October 1992	14 April 1993	CRC/C/3/Add.16
Russian Federation	15 September 1990	14 September 1992	16 October 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.5

Initial reports due in 1992 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Saint Kitts and Nevis	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	21 January 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.51
Senegal	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	12 September 1994	CRC/C/3/Add.31
Seychelles	7 October 1990	6 October 1992		
Sierra Leone	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	10 April 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.43
Sudan	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	29 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.3 and Add.20
Sweden	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	7 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.1
Togo	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	27 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.42
Uganda	16 September 1990	15 September 1992	1 February 1996	CRC/C/3/Add.40
Uruguay	20 December 1990	19 December 1992	2 August 1995	CRC/C/3/Add.37
Venezuela	13 October 1990	12 October 1992	9 July 1997	CRC/C/3/Add.54
Viet Nam	2 September 1990	1 September 1992	30 September 1992	CRC/C/3/Add.4 and Add.21
Zimbabwe	11 October 1990	10 October 1992	23 May 1995	CRC/C73/Add.35

Initial reports due in 1993

Angola	4 January 1991	3 January 1993		
Argentina	3 January 1991	2 January 1993	17 March 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.2 and Add.17
Australia	16 January 1991	15 January 1993	8 January 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.31
Bahamas	22 March 1991	21 March 1993		
Bulgaria	3 July 1991	2 July 1993	29 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.29
Colombia	27 February 1991	26 February 1993	14 April 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.3
Côte d'Ivoire	6 March 1991	5 March 1993		
Croatia	7 November 1991	6 November 1993	8 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.19
Cuba	20 September 1991	19 September 1993	27 October 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.30
Cyprus	9 March 1991	8 March 1993	22 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.24

Initial reports due in 1993 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Denmark	18 August 1991	17 August 1993	14 September 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.8
Djibouti	5 January 1991	4 January 1993		
Dominica	12 April 1991	11 April 1993		
Dominican Republic	11 July 1991	10 July 1993		
Estonia	20 November 1991	19 November 1993		
Ethiopia	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	10 August 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.27
Finland	20 July 1991	19 July 1993	12 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.22
Guyana	13 February 1991	12 February 1993		
Hungary	6 November 1991	5 November 1993	28 June 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.34
Israel	2 November 1991	1 November 1993		
Italy	5 October 1991	4 October 1993	11 October 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.18
Jamaica	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	25 January 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.12
Jordan	23 June 1991	22 June 1993	25 May 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.4
Kuwait	20 November 1991	19 November 1993	23 August 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.35
Lao People's Democratic Republic	7 June 1991	6 June 1993	18 January 1996	CRC/C/8/Add.32
Lebanon	13 June 1991	12 June 1993	21 December 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.23
Madagascar	18 April 1991	17 May 1993	20 July 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.5
Malawi	1 February 1991	31 January 1993		
Maldives	13 March 1991	12 March 1993	6 July 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.33 and Add.37
Mauritania	15 June 1991	14 June 1993		
Myanmar	14 August 1991	13 August 1993	14 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.9
Nigeria	19 May 1991	18 May 1993	19 July 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.26
Norway	7 February 1991	6 February 1993	30 August 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.7
Panama	11 January 1991	10 January 1993	19 September 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.28
Poland	7 July 1991	6 July 1993	11 January 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.11

Initial reports due in 1993 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Republic of Korea	20 December 1991	19 December 1993	17 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.21
Rwanda	23 February 1991	22 February 1993	30 September 1992	CRC/C/8/Add.1
San Marino	25 December 1991	24 December 1993		
Sao Tome and Principe	13 June 1991	12 June 1993		
Slovenia	25 June 1991	24 June 1993	29 May 1995	CRC/C/8/Add.25
Spain	5 January 1991	4 January 1993	10 August 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.6
Sri Lanka	11 August 1991	10 August 1993	23 March 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.13
The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	17 September 1991	16 September 1993	4 March 1997	CRC/C/8/Add.36
Ukraine	27 September 1991	26 September 1993	8 October 1993	CRC/C/8/Add.10/ Rev.1
United Republic of Tanzania	10 July 1991	9 July 1993	29 April 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.14
Yemen	31 May 1991	30 May 1993	14 November 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.20 and Add.38
Yugoslavia	2 February 1991	1 February 1993	21 September 1994	CRC/C/8/Add.16

Initial reports due in 1994

Albania	28 March 1992	27 March 1994		
Austria	5 September 1992	4 September 1994	8 October 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.14
Azerbaijan	12 September 1992	11 September 1994	9 November 1995	CRC/C/11/Add.8
Bahrain	14 March 1992	14 March 1994	26 May 1997	CRC/C/11/Add.15
Belgium	15 January 1992	14 January 1994	12 July 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6 March 1992	5 March 1994		
Cambodia	14 November 1992	15 November 1994		
Canada	12 January 1992	11 January 1994	17 June 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.3
Cape Verde	4 July 1992	3 July 1994		
Central African Republic	23 May 1992	23 May 1994		

Initial reports due in 1994 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
China	1 April 1992	31 March 1994	27 March 1995	CRC/C/11/Add.7
Czech Republic	1 January 1993	31 December 1994	4 March 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.11
Equatorial Guinea	15 July 1992	14 July 1994		
Germany	5 April 1992	4 May 1994	30 August 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.5
Iceland	27 November 1992	26 November 1994	30 November 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.6
Ireland	28 October 1992	27 October 1994	4 April 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.12
Latvia	14 May 1992	13 May 1994		
Lesotho	9 April 1992	8 April 1994		
Lithuania	1 March 1992	28 February 1994		
Slovakia	1 January 1993	31 December 1994		
Thailand	26 April 1992	25 April 1994	23 August 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.13
Trinidad and Tobago	4 January 1992	3 January 1994	16 February 1996	CRC/C/11/Add.10
Tunisia	29 February 1992	28 February 1994	16 May 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.2
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15 January 1992	14 January 1994	15 March 1994	CRC/C/11/Add.1, Add.9, Add.15 and Add.15/Corr.1
Zambia	5 January 1992	4 January 1994		

Initial reports due in 1995

Algeria	16 May 1993	15 May 1995	16 November 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.4
Antigua and Barbuda	4 November 1993	3 November 1995		
Armenia	23 July 1993	5 August 1995	19 February 1997	CRC/C/28/Add.9
Cameroon	10 February 1993	9 February 1995		
Comoros	22 July 1993	21 July 1995		
Congo	13 November 1993	12 November 1995		
Fiji	12 September 1993	11 September 1995	12 June 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.7
Greece	10 June 1993	9 June 1995		
India	11 January 1993	10 January 1995	19 March 1997	CRC/C/28/Add.10
Liberia	4 July 1993	3 July 1995		

Initial reports due in 1995 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	15 May 1993	14 May 1995	23 May 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.6
Marshall Islands	3 November 1993	2 November 1995		
Micronesia (Federated States of)	4 June 1993	3 June 1995	16 April 1996	CRC/C/28/Add.5
Monaco	21 July 1993	20 July 1995		
Morocco	21 July 1993	20 July 1995	27 July 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.1
New Zealand	6 May 1993	5 May 1995	29 September 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.3
Papua New Guinea	31 March 1993	31 March 1995		
Republic of Moldova	25 February 1993	24 February 1995		
Saint Lucia	16 July 1993	15 July 1995		
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	25 November 1993	24 November 1995		
Suriname	31 March 1993	31 March 1995		
Syrian Arab Republic	14 August 1993	13 August 1995	22 September 1995	CRC/C/28/Add.2
Tajikistan	25 November 1993	24 November 1995		
Turkmenistan	20 October 1993	19 October 1995		
Vanuatu	6 August 1993	5 August 1995	27 January 1997	CRC/C/28/Add.8

Initial reports due in 1996

Afghanistan	27 April 1994	26 April 1996		
Gabon	11 March 1994	10 March 1996		
Luxembourg	6 April 1994	5 April 1996	26 July 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.2
Japan	22 May 1994	21 May 1996	30 May 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.1
Mozambique	26 May 1994	25 May 1996		

Initial reports due in 1996 (continued)

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Georgia	2 July 1994	1 July 1996	7 April 1997	CRC/C/41/Add.4
Iraq	15 July 1994	14 July 1996	6 August 1996	CRC/C/41/Add.3
Uzbekistan	29 July 1994	28 July 1996		
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	12 August 1994	11 August 1996		
Nauru	26 August 1994	25 August 1996		
Eritrea	2 September 1994	1 September 1996		
Kazakstan	11 September 1994	10 September 1996		
Kyrgyzstan	6 November 1994	5 November 1996		
Samoa	29 December 1994	28 December 1996		

Initial reports due in 1997

Netherlands	7 March 1995	6 March 1997	15 May 1997	CRC/C/51/Add.1
Malaysia	19 March 1995	18 March 1997		
Botswana	13 April 1995	12 April 1997		
Qatar	3 May 1995	2 May 1997		
Turkey	4 May 1995	3 May 1997		
Solomon Islands	10 May 1995	9 May 1997		
Haiti	8 July 1995	7 July 1997		
South Africa	16 July 1995	15 July 1997		
Pilau	3 September 1995	3 September 1997		
Swaziland	6 October 1995	5 October 1997		
Tuvalu	22 October 1995	21 October 1997		
Singapore	4 November 1995	3 November 1997		
Tonga	6 December 1995	5 December 1997		

Initial reports due in 1998

State party	Date of entry into force	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Kiribati	10 January 1996	9 January 1998		
Niue	19 January 1996	18 January 1998		
Liechtenstein	21 January 1996	20 January 1998		
Brunei Darussalam	26 January 1996	25 January 1998		
Andorra	1 February 1996	31 January 1998		
Saudi Arabia	25 February 1996	24 February 1998		

Initial reports due in 1999

United Arab Emirates	2 February 1997	1 February 1999		
Switzerland	26 March 1997	25 March 1999		
Cook Islands	6 July 1997	5 July 1999		

Second periodic reports due in 1997

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Bangladesh	1 September 1997		
Barbados	7 November 1997		
Belarus	30 October 1997		
Belize	1 September 1997		
Benin	1 September 1997		
Bhutan	1 September 1997		
Bolivia	1 September 1997	12 August 1997	CRC/C/65/Add.1
Brazil	23 October 1997		
Burkina Faso	29 September 1997		
Burundi	17 November 1997		
Chad	31 October 1997		
Chile	11 September 1997		
Costa Rica	20 September 1997		
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	20 October 1997		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	26 October 1997		
Ecuador	1 September 1997		
Egypt	1 September 1997		
El Salvador	1 September 1997		
France	5 September 1997		
Gambia	6 September 1997		
Ghana	1 September 1997		
Grenada	4 December 1997		
Guatemala	1 September 1997		
Guinea	1 September 1997		
Guinea-Bissau	18 September 1997		
Holy See	1 September 1997		
Honduras	8 September 1997	18 September 1997	CRC/C/65/Add.2
Indonesia	4 October 1997		
Kenya	1 September 1997		
Mali	19 October 1997		
Malta	29 October 1997		
Mauritius	1 September 1997		
Mexico	20 October 1997		
Mongolia	1 September 1997		
Namibia	29 October 1997		
Nepal	13 October 1997		
Nicaragua	3 November 1997		
Niger	29 October 1997		
Pakistan	11 December 1997		
Paraguay	24 October 1997		

Second periodic reports due in 1997 (continued)

State party	Date due	Date of submission	Symbol
Peru	3 October 1997		
Philippines	19 September 1997		
Portugal	20 October 1997		
Romania	27 October 1997		
Russian Federation	14 September 1997		
Saint Kitts and Nevis	1 September 1997		
Senegal	1 September 1997		
Seychelles	6 October 1997		
Sierra Leone	1 September 1997		
Sudan	1 September 1997		
Sweden	1 September 1997	25 September 1997	CRC/C/65/Add.3
Togo	1 September 1997		
Uganda	15 September 1997		
Uruguay	19 December 1997		
Venezuela	12 October 1997		
Viet Nam	1 September 1997		
Zimbabwe	10 October 1997		

Annex IV

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS, DOCUMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE GENERAL DISCUSSION ON THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 1997

By members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

Introductory statement by Ms. Nafsiah Mboi

Children with disabilities caused by landmines and ordnance by Mr. Francesco Paolo Fulci

By the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

General discussion on children with disabilities. Informal background note by the secretariat

Human Rights and Disabled Persons by Mr. Leandro Despouy, Special Rapporteur of the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.XIV.4)

By the Special Rapporteur of the Commission for Social Development on Disability

The convention and the standard rules. Oral statement by Mr. Bengt Linqvist

Government action on disability policy - a global survey by Mr. Dimitris Michailakis

By the United Nations Children's Fund

Children and violence in Innocenti Digest No. 2, September 1997

Adolescence and disability. Issue paper for the discussion day

Disabled children. An annotated listing of information sources. Research and Documentation Centre, Geneva Office

By the International Committee of the Red Cross

Statement for the thematic day

By non-governmental organizations, research institutions and individual experts

The right to life and development. Submission to the thematic day by Disabled Peoples' International - European Region

Disabled children - agendas for research by the School of Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leeds (United Kingdom)

Inclusive education - a framework for change. National and international perspectives by the Centre for Studies on Inclusive Education

Addressing the needs of children with learning disabilities. Submission by the International School Psychology Association

The rights of the child with disabilities. Contributing remarks from the International Federation of Social Workers

The rights of children with disabilities. Statement by Kesher (information, counselling and support centre in Israel for parents of children with special needs)

Programme on disabled children. Documents submitted by the International Catholic Child Bureau

Children with disabilities. Paper submitted by Christian Children's Fund

Commitments to girls with disabilities. Extract from the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995

Document prepared by the Women's Committees of Disabled Peoples' International

Åke's Book by Kristina Lundgren, Bokförlager libris, Orebro, Sweden, 1993

The rights of children with disabilities. How is progress monitored? A review of national and NGO reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child by Lillemor Andersson Brolin. Commissioned by Rädda Barnen, Sweden

The rights of children with disabilities. Submission by International Save the Children Alliance

As if children matter: Perspectives on children, rights and disabilities. Inclusion International, September 1997

Getting there - International update on inclusive education. Inclusion International, November 1997

Towards a society for all children. Report of a conference on disabled children held in October 1996 in Durban, South Africa

International protection of children's right to health: the medical screening of newborns by Sanford J. Fox and Diony Young, Boston College, Third World Law Journal, volume XI, Winter 1991, No. 1

Equality rights of persons with disabilities - Canadian and international perspectives by David Lepofsky, in Human Rights in the Twenty-first Century, a Global Challenge K.E. Mahoney and Paul Mahponey (eds.), Martinus Nijhoff, 1993.

The rights of children with disabilities. Position paper by Bizchut, the Israeli Human Rights Centre for People with Disabilities

Just technology? From principles to practice in bio-ethical issues. Paper by the International League of Societies for Persons with Mental Handicap

Children's health by Beatrice Marzano Trinchese

Annex V

LIST OF INITIAL REPORTS CONSIDERED BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD AS AT 10 OCTOBER 1997

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Third session (January 1993)		
Bolivia	CRC/C/3/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.1
Sweden	CRC/C/3/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.2
Viet Nam	CRC/C/3/Add.4 and 21	CRC/C/15/Add.3
Russian Federation	CRC/C/3/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.4
Egypt	CRC/C/3/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.5
Sudan	CRC/C/3/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.6 (preliminary)
Fourth session (September-October 1993)		
Indonesia	CRC/C/3/Add.10	CRC/C/15/Add.7 (preliminary)
Peru	CRC/C/3/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.8
El Salvador	CRC/C/3/Add.9 and 28	CRC/C/15/Add.9
Sudan	CRC/C/3/Add.3 and 20	CRC/C/15/Add.10
Costa Rica	CRC/C/3/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.11
Rwanda	CRC/C/8/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.12 (preliminary)
Fifth session (January 1994)		
Mexico	CRC/C/3/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.13
Namibia	CRC/C/3/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.14
Colombia	CRC/C/8/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.15 (preliminary)
Romania	CRC/C/3/Add.16	CRC/C/15/Add.16
Belarus	CRC/C/3/Add.14	CRC/C/15/Add.17
Sixth session (April 1994)		
Pakistan	CRC/C/3/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.18
Burkina Faso	CRC/C/3/Add.19	CRC/C/15/Add.19
France	CRC/C/3/Add.15	CRC/C/15/Add.20
Jordan	CRC/C/8/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.21
Chile	CRC/C/3/Add.18	CRC/C/15/Add.22
Norway	CRC/C/8/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.23

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Seventh session (September-October 1994)		
Honduras	CRC/C/3/Add.17	CRC/C/15/Add.24
Indonesia	CRC/C/3/Add.10 and 26	CRC/C/15/Add.25
Madagascar	CRC/C/8/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.26
Paraguay	CRC/C/3/Add.22	CRC/C/15/Add.27 (preliminary)
Spain	CRC/C/8/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.28
Argentina	CRC/C/8/Add.2 and 17	CRC/C/15/Add.35 (adopted at the eighth session)
Eighth session (January 1995)		
Philippines	CRC/C/3/Add.23	CRC/C/15/Add.29
Colombia	CRC/C/8/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.30
Poland	CRC/C/8/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.31
Jamaica	CRC/C/8/Add.12	CRC/C/15/Add.32
Denmark	CRC/C/8/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.33
United Kingdom	CRC/C/11/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.34
Ninth session (May-June 1995)		
Nicaragua	CRC/C/3/Add.25	CRC/C/15/Add.36
Canada	CRC/C/11/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.37
Belgium	CRC/C/11/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.38
Tunisia	CRC/C/11/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.39
Sri Lanka	CRC/C/8/Add.13	CRC/C/15/Add.40
Tenth session (October-November 1995)		
Italy	CRC/C/8/Add.18	CRC/C/15/Add.41
Ukraine	CRC/C/8/Add.10/Rev.1	CRC/C/15/Add.42
Germany	CRC/C/11/Add.5	CRC/C/15/Add.43
Senegal	CRC/C/3/Add.31	CRC/C/15/Add.44
Portugal	CRC/C/3/Add.30	CRC/C/15/Add.45
Holy See	CRC/C/3/Add.27	CRC/C/15/Add.46

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Eleventh session (January 1996)		
Yemen	CRC/C/8/Add.20	CRC/C/15/Add.47
Mongolia	CRC/C/3/Add.32	CRC/C/15/Add.48
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	CRC/C/8/Add.26	CRC/C/15/Add.49
Iceland	CRC/C/11/Add.6	CRC/C/15/Add.50
Republic of Korea	CRC/C/8/Add.21	CRC/C/15/Add.51
Croatia	CRC/C/8/Add.19	CRC/C/15/Add.52
Finland	CRC/C/8/Add.22	CRC/C/15/Add.53
Twelfth session (May-June 1996)		
Lebanon	CRC/C/18/Add.23	CRC/C/15/Add.54
Zimbabwe	CRC/C/3/Add.35	CRC/C/15/Add.55
China	CRC/C/11/Add.7	CRC/C/15/Add.56
Nepal	CRC/C/3/Add.34	CRC/C/15/Add.57
Guatemala	CRC/C/3/Add.33	CRC/C/15/Add.58
Cyprus	CRC/C/8/Add.24	CRC/C/15/Add.59
Thirteenth session (September-October 1996)		
Morocco	CRC/C/28/Add.1	CRC/C/15/Add.60
Nigeria	CRC/C/8/Add.26	CRC/C/15/Add.61
Uruguay	CRC/C/3/Add.37	CRC/C/15/Add.62
United Kingdom (Hong Kong)	CRC/C/11/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.63
Mauritius	CRC/C/3/Add.36	CRC/C/15/Add.64
Slovenia	CRC/C/8/Add.25	CRC/C/15/Add.65
Fourteenth session (January 1997)		
Ethiopia	CRC/C/8/Add.27	CRC/C/15/Add.66
Myanmar	CRC/C/8/Add.9	CRC/C/15/Add.67
Panama	CRC/C/8/Add.28	CRC/C/15/Add.68
Syrian Arab Republic	CRC/C/28/Add.2	CRC/C/15/Add.69
New Zealand	CRC/C/28/Add.3	CRC/C/15/Add.70
Bulgaria	CRC/C/8/Add.29	CRC/C/15/Add.71

	State party reports	Observations adopted by the Committee
Fifteenth session (May-June 1997)		
Cuba	CRC/C/8/Add.30	CRC/C/15/Add.72
Ghana	CRC/C/3/Add.39	CRC/C/15/Add.73
Bangladesh	CRC/C/3/Add.38 and 49	CRC/C/15/Add.74
Paraguay	CRC/C/3/Add.22 and 47	CRC/C/15/Add.75
Algeria	CRC/C/28/Add.4	CRC/C/15/Add.76
Azerbaijan	CRC/C/11/Add.8	CRC/C/15/Add.77
Sixteenth session (September-October 1997)		
Lao People's Democratic Republic	CRC/C/8/Add.32	CRC/C/15/Add.78
Australia	CRC/C/8/Add.31	CRC/C/15/Add.79
Uganda	CRC/C/3/Add.40	CRC/C/15/Add.80
Czech Republic	CRC/C/11/Add.11	CRC/C/15/Add.81
Trinidad and Tobago	CRC/C/11/Add.10	CRC/C/15/Add.82
Togo	CRC/C/3/Add.42	CRC/C/15/Add.83

Annex VI

PROVISIONAL LIST OF INITIAL REPORTS SCHEDULED FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE COMMITTEE'S SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH SESSIONS

Seventeenth session
(5-23 January 1998)

Maldives	CRC/C/8/Add.33
Ireland	CRC/C/11/Add.12
Micronesia	CRC/C/28/Add.5
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	CRC/C/28/Add.6

Eighteenth session
(19 May-5 June 1998)

Japan	CRC/C/41/Add.1
Ecuador	CRC/C/3/Add.44
Fiji	CRC/C/28/Add.7
Hungary	CRC/C/8/Add.34
Luxembourg	CRC/C/41/Add.2
Iraq	CRC/C/41/Add.3

Annex VII

LIST OF DOCUMENTS ISSUED FOR THE SIXTEENTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

CRC/C/2/Rev.6	Reservations, declarations and objections relating to the Convention on the Rights of the Child
CRC/C/3/Add.40	Initial report of Uganda
CRC/C/3/Add.42	Initial report of Togo
CRC/C/8/Add.31	Initial report of Australia
CRC/C/8/Add.32	Initial report of the Lao People's Democratic Republic
CRC/C/11/Add.10	Initial report of Trinidad and Tobago
CRC/C/11/Add.11	Initial report of the Czech Republic
CRC/C/15/Add.78	Concluding observations: Lao People's Democratic Republic
CRC/C/15/Add.79	Concluding observations: Australia
CRC/C/15/Add.80	Concluding observations: Uganda
CRC/C/15/Add.81	Concluding observations: Czech Republic
CRC/C/15/Add.82	Concluding observations: Trinidad and Tobago
CRC/C/15/Add.83	Concluding observations: Togo
CRC/C/27/Rev.9	Note by the Secretary-General on follow-up to the consideration of reports
CRC/C/40/Rev.7	Note by the Secretary-General on areas identified by the Committee for technical assistance
CRC/C/67	Note by the Secretary-General on the States parties to the Convention and the status of submission of reports
CRC/C/68	Provisional agenda and annotations
CRC/C/SR.399-426	Summary records of the sixteenth session